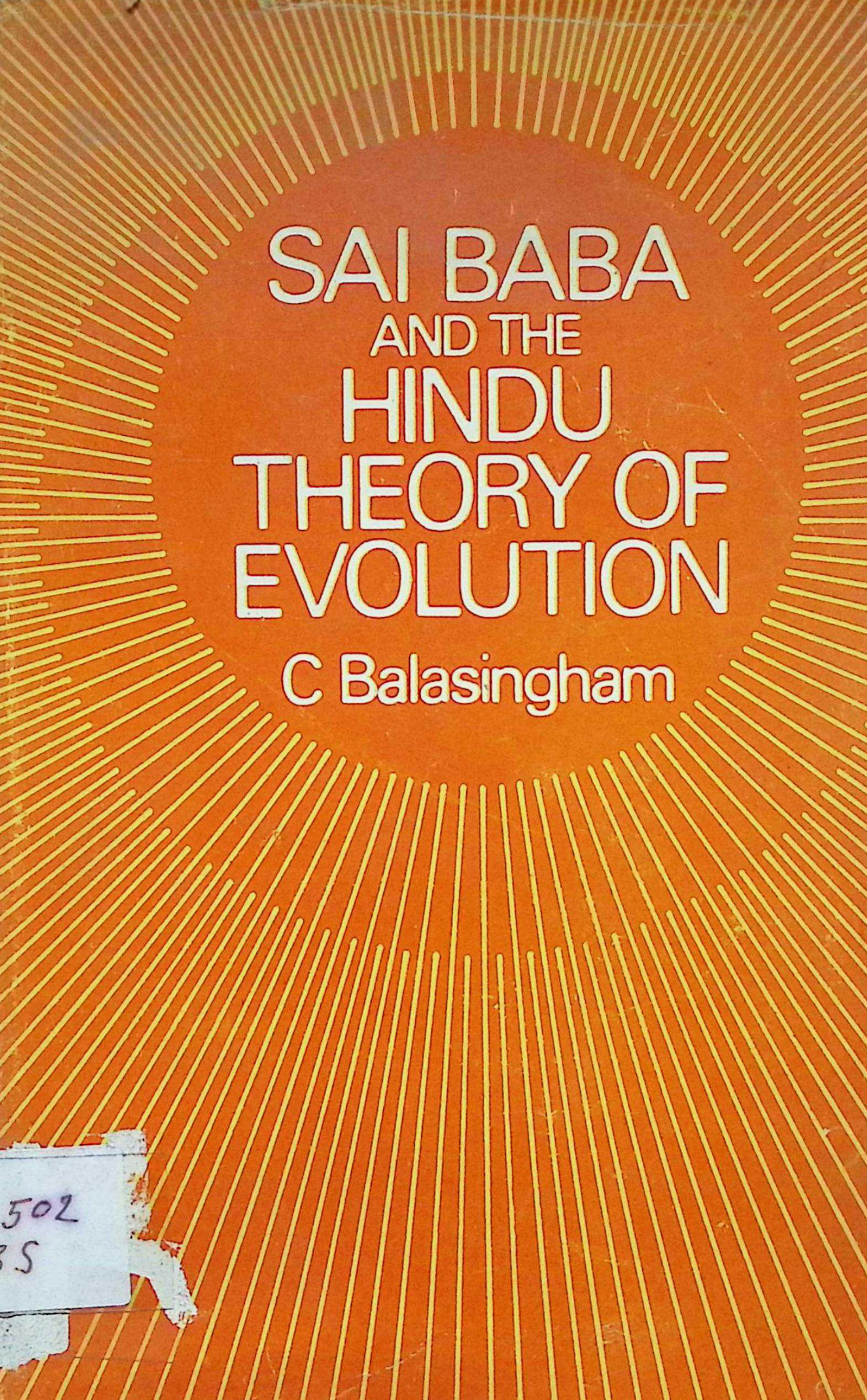

SAI BABA
AND THE
HINDU THEORY OF EVOLUTION

C Balasingham

502
3.S

In a world dominated by the uncontrolled use of technology and the destructive force of science, it is increasingly important to understand the human mind, to know its limitations and potential. Introspection is, perhaps, the best way to overcome the fears and tensions generated by modern society, and this book formulates, in a simple and lucid fashion, the teachings and precepts of the seers and ancient texts of India in this regard. Some of the major concepts of Hindu philosophy—such as *karma* and the manner in which it operates, *karmayoga*, and the origins and role of *dharma*—have been explained with the help of examples. The author has drawn upon three distinct systems of Hindu philosophy—Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga, with an occasional sally into Tantric Monism as well—to provide a syncretic overview of the Hindu theory of evolution.

An important thread running through the whole book is the nature and power of God and his omnipotence. God, according to the author, is an abstract power capable, when occasion requires, of concretising Itself and acting on the phenomenal plane. This explains the powers of Satya Sai Baba who is an *avatara*—or God in a concretized human form—and can, therefore, perform feats which no ordinary mortal is capable of. However, even though he is an *avatara*, the miracles he performs are circumscribed by the immutable laws of *dharma* which he cannot interfere with. Sai Baba's ability to produce objects from nowhere, prove the Hindu thesis that mind is really a subtle form of matter and can be objectified.

Rs. 18.00

Sai Baba and the Hindu Theory of Evolution

Sai Baba and the Hindu Theory of Evolution

C BALASINGHAM

M

© *C. Balasingham, 1974*

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior permission.

Published by
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF INDIA LIMITED
DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS
Associated companies throughout the world

SBN : 33390 069 3

Published by
S.G. Wasani for The Macmillan Company of India Limited and
printed at R. P. Printers, Shahdara, Delhi 110032.

291.22
BAL

294.502
~~291.22~~
B183 A

स्मारक पुस्तकालय ★ डाक्टर दिल्ली
A06

Contents

Preface vii

Unity of the Cosmos 1

Mind and Matter 7

Transmigration 16

The Functioning of the Mind 22

Escape from Karma 26

God—Sat-Cit-Ananda 36

Morality 42

Mind over Matter 45

Worship and Manifestations 52

Release 56

A Statement of the Metaphysical Laws Formulated in this Book 60

Glossary of Sanskrit Terms 63

Bibliography 72

Preface

Recent dazzling achievements in science tend to dominate man's thinking today. The power responsible for this enormous success—the human mind—needs close scrutiny and control to prevent it from plunging into the abyss of disaster. An introspective analysis of its potentialities and its limitations, the source of its powers and the core of its contents, its *raison d'être* and its ultimate resolution, alone can transform the mind into a vehicle carrying the pilgrim soul to its goal. The key to this analysis can be found in the *Sanatana Dharma* (the Eternal Code) formulated by the seers of ancient India. This is a humble attempt (by one who is not a scientist) to formulate some aspects of these teachings in an idiom familiar to students of science and interest them in another dimension of knowledge where practice and learning are intensely personal, where experience cannot be readily transferred or demonstrated to others. Despite the difficulties, introspection and control of the mind are the only way out of the fears and tensions generated by the uncontrolled use of technology and the competitive use of science in domination and destruction. The taming of the mind and its subjugation to a higher code will not only help canalise new advances in science to fruitful paths, but will also provide society with a new scale of values and a reappraisal of the worth of man—as the last stage in the evolution towards divinity.

A civilisation preening itself on its phenomenal achievements in science and technology and oozing confidence in its ability to master the universe, stands baffled before the miracles of Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba, which are reaching out to an ever wider audience. A brief booklet containing his life sketch and teachings has already been published. Those who have personally seen His miracles or have heard about them will want to know how these are possible. 'What has Hindu philosophy to say about these miracles?' will be their question. Equally baffling to our scientific civilisation must be Baba's announcement that He is God incarnate. Where God is no more than a possibility at a distance, people who hear that God walks the earth in human form will want to know who or what is God ? How can a man be God? This book is a modest attempt to give a few clues and leave the reader to read and think more on the subject. Should the Cartesian dichotomy of mind and matter be discarded? Can matter emanate from mind as its grosser variant? Can Hindu metaphysics, which postulates the existence of this universe in a field of consciousness and a broad pattern of determinism in a space-time-causation matrix, be accepted? Can the Hindu theory of causation be accepted and how far does it go towards explaining supra-normal phenomena ? If this book arouses further thinking, reading and discussion on these topics it would have served its purpose.

The intention of this book is to interest people not familiar with Hindu thought, and induce them to study Hindu philosophy in greater detail. Readers already familiar with Hindu philosophy may find that not only is this presentation new, but certain aspects may possibly be strange. From them I must ask forgiveness because in this thesis three distinct systems of Hindu philosophy, namely, Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga, have been combined to complement each other, with an occasional sally into Tantric Monism as well. The 'strange' aspects derive from this unusual mixture of different philosophies. So long as there is internal consistency in the thesis presented, philosophical purism has not been considered important. The aim is the presentation of a framework of Indian thought with a wide coverage, so that the reader can elaborate further by reading about detailed topics elsewhere. This wide coverage would not have been possible if only one system had been presented in the traditional way.

Hindu scriptures contain frequent references to the evolution of the phenomenal universe and to properties of matter. But their intention was to explain certain religious and philosophical teachings using this information as an aid, and therefore it is not possible to find anywhere detailed and coherent accounts of phenomenal matters. Isolated statements have to be pieced together to get a detailed picture. In this process, too, the combination of different systems of philosophy has been very useful.

One more apology to those familiar with the dialectics of Sankara. The title of the book and the whole presentation is on the basis of evolution—*parinama* in Sanskrit. In explaining the projection of the phenomenal universe, Sankara refuted and rejected the concept of *parinama* and maintained that the changes are all 'false appearance' or *vivarta*. The difference as explained by Indian writers is this : *parinama* is an irreversible change like milk becoming curd, a change of substance. But *vivarta* on the other hand is only a false or mistaken appearance like a piece of rope being mistaken for a snake. In developing this thesis the concept of evolution had to be used, as any concept of *vivarta*, however profound, could not adequately explain in detail the whole gamut of evolution from the origins of *hiranyagarbha*, energy, matter and mind out of primordial nature, to the most complicated biological specimen of man and the operation of the laws of *karma* and cosmic energies. Once the operation of *Brahman* and the phenomenal universe and their unity is explained using the concept of evolution, it will be easier to refine the idea and explain Sankara's point of view thus : Although in human experience all these changes are recognised as evolutionary changes, we must remember that *Brahman* is beyond human knowledge or experience. *Brahman* never changed into the phenomenal world. It has always remained unchanged. The manifestation and functioning of the phenomenal world is really part of the operation and fulfilment of *Brahman* and its constituents—the principles of *sat-cit-ananda*, *karma*, and *dharma*—working towards the ultimate goal of liberation for all souls now caught up in *maya*. Since *Brahman* remains what it is through all these changes, the more appropriate description of these changes may be *vivarta* rather than *parinama*, though it is recognised that both words are inadequate to describe supra-human phenomena and activities.

Readers new to Hindu thought are urged to read more deeply and get to know the rare treasures that Hindu philosophy offers—and, more important than everything else, practice Hindu philosophy as a useful and rational way of life in the modern world. The only way of escape from the stresses and strains of modern life is to look pleasure and pain in the eye and call them twin imposters of no consequence at all; to do the right thing under all circumstances without any sense of attachment; and above all to live and act rationally with faith in yourself and in the future of the world.

The use of Sanskrit words could not be avoided altogether. To assist readers not familiar with Hindu thought, one word translations have been appended to Sanskrit words when they appear for the first time. This may not prove satisfactory and, therefore, a glossary of some key words has been provided at the end of the book.

Colombo
Sri Lanka
September 1974

C. BALASINGHAM

Hindu Theory of Evolution

Unity of the Cosmos

Man longs to be free; but, beguiled by the senses, he has lost his way in the jungle of modern civilisation. To guide him along the correct path man has been given the Sanatana Dharma (the Eternal Code) enshrined in the ancient Sastras. The Svetasvatara Upanishad refers to man as 'Amrtasya Putra'—Child of Immortality. 'Man is born for a high destiny, as the inheritor of a rich heritage. He should not fritter his days in low pursuits and vulgar vanities. His destiny is to know the truth and live in it, and for it. The truth alone can make him free, happy and secure. If he is not prompted by this high purpose, life is a waste, a mere tossing on the waves, for the sea of life is never calm. Man seeks to get contentment and joy, by subjugating nature to his fragile Will. But all efforts to establish mastery over *prakrti* (nature)* or to command or employ it for personal aggrandisement are bound to fail, are certain to recoil on man, with deadly impact.'[1] Man does not realise that *prakrti* is just the *leela* (sport) of the Lord set before him so that he may become aware of His glory and His splendour.

The entire world is *Brahman* (God) or Absolute, one substance, one energy, one mind. *Brahman* is present in everything in this universe—both animate and inanimate. In inanimate substances the presence of *Brahman* as *prana* (the spirit) is not manifest or apparent. Life as we recognise it starts with the plant or vegetative world, and is manifested by a separate identity, with an existence of its own—*sat* (existence or being) according to Hindu philosophy. When we examine the animal world there is evidence of instinct, which is diffused in the early stages, and gets canalised in the course of evolution through the vertebral column into the brain. Though the higher animals have fully developed brains and have memory, we hesitate to attribute thinking to them, and prefer to attribute their actions to instincts, conditioned reflexes, and similar automatic processes. However, in man, the ultimate in evolution in the animal world, one can notice thinking in its fullest form with an ability to look forward and backward and a sense of discrimination—*cit* (knowledge or thinking) according to Hindu philosophy. Coming into this world equipped with *sat* and *cit*, man longs for *ananda* (happiness). Though he looks for it in the wrong place, man's destiny is to evolve into *sat-cit-ananda* (the three attributes of the supreme in Hinduism) and merge in the eternal divinity that energises, informs and controls this universe—*Brahman*. This concept of *Brahman* is an impersonal one and difficult to describe in words. Perhaps the nearest approach is to conceive it as a mighty force from which the universe has emerged and into which everything must eventually return. Thus, the Hindu theory of evolution starting from the inanimate world—a point ahead of the beginning of Darwin's theory—looks forward to the destiny that should rightly be man's if he discards his lower nature and manifests the divinity latent in him.

---

[1] Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba, *Satya Sai Speaks*, Vol. VI, p. 234.

* The one word meanings given in the text for Sanskrit words are inadequate for the Western reader and he is advised to use the Glossary at the end of the book, as it gives a much fuller meaning.

The Operation of Gunas

In its effort to crack the secret of life, molecular biology has found three ultimate principles present in every living molecule—the active principle or the energy principle, the directing principle and the structural principle. The basic and fundamental principles found in the microcosm must have their counterparts in the macrocosm as well. In examining the macrocosm we may use the help offered by Hindu philosophy. *Sankhya* philosophy states that the whole story of evolution started with an imbalance among three *gunas* (aspects or forces)—the *satva guna* (brightness or knowledge aspect), *rajo guna* (activity or energy aspect), and *tamo guna* (inertia aspect). At the beginning of creation *moola prakrti* (primordial nature or cosmic power) remained *avyakta* (in the undifferentiated form), because of this peculiar balance among the three *gunas*—*satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*.

Evolution as we know it started with the disturbance of this critical balance. Knowledge and activity can readily be recognised as the counterparts of the directing principle and the active principle of the molecular biologists. Inertia is familiar to students of science as the principle for the maintenance of status quo. In its operation in the biological molecule it ensures the creation of structures that will be in consonance with the larger unit and maintain the continuity of that unit. Thus we can understand the structure principle of the molecular biologists as a function or expression of the principle of inertia (*tamas*).

Sankara describes *rajo guna* as having *viksepa sakti*—the ability to project something, and *tamo guna* as having *avarana sakti* or the power of veiling reality. This appears to be different from the explanation of the functions of the *rajas* and *tamas* given in the preceding paragraph. Sankaracharya was concerned with ultimate reality and therefore described *tamas* which obstructed man's search for reality as the cause responsible for the phenomenal world of 'name and form' which covers reality. Modern science considers the existence and search for the ultimate reality outside its province, and is therefore concerned with the cover only and not with what it covers, or its function as an obstruction to a view of reality. Looking at the cover only, science describes its function as the principle responsible for form or structure. Sankara's explanation of *rajas* as the power that projects something non-existent is not substantially different from the approach of science which describes its function as the active principle.

In the functioning of the phenomenal world these three *gunas* remain in certain states of balance and when their balance alters various changes result. Though science considers organic and inorganic substances in distinct compartments, the presence of the balance of the three aspects in both types of substances is clearly discernible. In organic life when the directing principle, corresponding to *satva* of Hindu philosophy, gets weakened for one reason or another, there is a cancerous growth resulting from the uncontrolled functioning of the active principle and the structure principle. Thermodynamics provides a parallel in the inanimate world. The second law of thermodynamics refers to an occasional randomness. There is a weakening of the *satva* or directing principle in inanimate matter causing randomness and disorder till the initial impetus spends itself out or till it is checkmated by inertia. Indeed, it is inevitable that the presence of the three aspects or *gunas* and their balance and imbalance should manifest themselves in inanimate as well as in animate substances.

Though animate and inanimate substances are no longer treated as belonging to separate compartments, few scientists appreciate fully the fundamental unity between them. For example, it is not generally recognised that the balance of forces within the atom, and the ecological balance in nature are manifestations in different spheres of the same principle. *Gunas* or aspects are responsible for all differentiation and specialisation in nature. Basically, men, animals and things are all manifestations of the Absolute or *Brahman* through *prakrti* composed of the three *gunas*.

Using the idiom of science, the first two laws of Hindu Metaphysics may be formulated thus:

First Law: The manifested universe exists in a vast field of consciousness called Hiranyagarbha (literally golden egg). Everything big or small, animate or inanimate, existing in this field of cosmic consciousness is a focal point covered by a vehicle or Upadhi.

Second Law: Every Upadhi contains mind, life-energy, and matter in varying proportions; the manifestation of mind and life-energy in the Upadhi varies with the percentage of these components in the Upadhi. All three components are basically the same—mind is a finer form of matter; and matter is a grosser form of mind.

We must be clear about our terms—mind, life-energy and matter.

Mind is the equipment by which an organism receives impulses from outside and reacts to them.

Life is an energy or force with three activities: (a) Growth of an organism towards realisation of the full potentialities of that organism, (b) maintenance of the identity of the organism through all the changes that take place during growth and maturity, and (c) reproduction of its kind to maintain continuity of the species.

Matter is that component which makes the organism manifested, i.e., knowable by one or more senses of knowledge. We are deliberately avoiding an explanation which says matter occupies space, because space is also a kind of matter according to Hindu Metaphysics. Air is matter which can be known by the sense of touch; most items of matter can be seen, tasted and/or smelt.

Everything big or small contains in its core a spark of the Divine and the object we see with our senses is only the *upadhi* (vehicle) carrying this spark in it. There is a very strong urge in this spark to return to and merge in the Divine Light from which it emerged. This urge is the impetus to the whole drama of evolution. In considering the progress of evolution from inert matter to man, we notice a progressive increase in the manifestation of life and mind. In no object is any of these three components totally absent, though many tend to assume that in inert matter there is no life or mind. As we progress upwards, life becomes more manifest in plants, but the mind is still slow in showing itself. In animals, life is more active allowing mobility, and mind comes more into prominence. In animals initially the mind is diffused throughout the organism, and later gets canalised through the vertebral column into the brain. With the progressive development of the mind, some functions of life get atrophied—lower animals can replace a limb they lose, but this ability is not evident in the higher animals which use their brain to a larger extent. The brain that becomes more and more complex, reaches maximum development in man, who is the acme of evolution in the animal kingdom. This highly evolved structure of the brain is necessary for the abstract and complicated processes of reasoning used by man. Thus we note that the *upadhi* moves more and more in the direction of life and mind to meet the more complex and higher needs of the organism progressing in evolution.

The process of evolution from inert matter through plant and animal life and man to divinity may be likened to 'the hop, step, and jump' of athletics. The process of evolution up to the higher animal stage may be compared to the athlete's running and the hop. Evolution into man will be the step. The final jump into divinity requires a tremendous effort and that is why man is provided with this high content of mind and along with it free will. Man's use of his faculty in the wrong direction is perhaps an inescapable risk in conferring freedom of action.

Man is the only created being that has tried to interfere with the pattern ordained by nature. His ability to think, to communicate his thoughts to fellow beings, and to record them for posterity, have enabled him to build up cumulatively a volume of knowledge, which he uses in trying to shape his environment to suit his desires. As man's thinking is essentially material; civilisation and progress have been defined as the measure of his ability to adapt his environment to suit his requirements. He seeks happiness along this path and meets with frustration partly because nature does not submit to his will so readily and produces unexpected side effects as noticed above; and partly because often the goals desired by man are too high and the strain involved is so great that even when those goals are attained—which is rather seldom—man is so broken down that he cannot enjoy the fruits of his labour with content. When the goals are not reached, frustration and bitterness are all that one gets out of life. Even when they are reached, there is no mental peace. Drugs and tranquillisers cannot solve this problem.

Mind and Matter

Tranquillity of mind is no doubt necessary. But to acquire it we must understand the composition of the mind, its functions and operative methods. Hindu philosophy studies the mind in three aspects—*citta*, memory or consciousness; *manas*, the thinking or functional aspect of the mind, and *buddhi*, the higher intellect or the discriminating faculty. Unfortunately, these terms are not used uniformly in these senses, and occasionally other terms are also used. However, the discriminating reader of the Hindu *Sastras* (scriptures) can readily recognise these three aspects of the mind being discussed separately or together. The *citta* of the individual is a fragment of the universal or cosmic *citta*, and the relationship between both have to be examined. While *manas*, the functional aspect, has to be studied in the context in which it operates, *buddhi* can best be understood by considering the special impact of *purusa* (soul) on the mind, as this impact is the essence of the discriminative faculty.

What is *citta* as cosmic mind? Western thought is based on the dichotomy of mind and matter, as mutually exclusive entities, as taught by Descartes. Those who have been brought up in that tradition will find it difficult to accept that mind is only a finer form of matter, and that the base of our Universe is an all encompassing frame of mind or consciousness. The phenomenal world evolved from this Cosmic Mind. When Vedanta says that the world is a projection of the mind and is not a reality, it does not mean that the world is a figment of the imagination. As an evolute of the cosmic mind, it is part of *prakrti* (nature) and not eternal, and therefore not real. It appears as real because our individual mind vibrates in unison with the cosmic mind and is able to establish rapport with the cosmic mind and its evolutes. The *Upanishads* explain that *mahat* or *hiranyagarbha* (cosmic consciousness) was first evolved from *moola prakrti* and everything else evolved from *hiranyagarbha*. The *Puranas* personify *hiranyagarbha* as *Brahma*, the four-faced creator in the Hindu trinity, and say he created all the rest. *Yoga Vasishtha* reconciles these two views thus: 'This world which appears so vast and extensive was not in being at the beginning. It existed in the pure spirit of Brahma, and was evolved from the Citta of Brahma' (Verse 39, Ch. 7, *Utpatti Ehanda*).[1]

We have already noted in the section on *gunas* (pp. 2-6) that the three components—*satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*—of *moola prakrti* or cosmic power remain in a critical balance in the unmanifested stage. When *srishti kalpana* (creative ideation) begins to operate this balance is disturbed. When *satva* predominates over the other two (which continue to operate, though weakly) *hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness or cosmic intelligence evolves from *moola prakrti*. From this first evolute everything else arises. and, therefore, in the *Puranas* or Hindu mythologies *hiranyagarbha* is personified as *Brahma*— the four-faced Creator. The Prasna Upanishad shows that *rayi* (cosmic matter) and *prana* (cosmic energy) were evolved from *hiranyagarbha* and operate under its control (see Sir James Jeans in the penultimate page of his *Mysterious Universe*: 'Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter'.) The physical universe is a combination of these evolutes of *moola prakrti*—cosmic consciousness, cosmic energy and cosmic matter. Let us formulate our next law thus :

Third Law: Prana or cosmic energy and Rayi or cosmic matter evolved from Hiranyagarbha and operate under its control. Later, by a process of differentiation or individuation, the five grand principles were evolved.

Thus it is important to remember that according to the Hindu theory of evolution, intelligence is built into the scheme of evolution and we get an orderly cosmos and not chaos. If we reflect on the conditions necessary for life on earth, and the number of forces inter-playing and cooperating to produce these conditions, we realise that there is unified control and direction behind these forces. In our concept of the ecological balance of nature we recognise that some species must prey on others and that this apparent conflict really leads to a higher synthesis, viz., the maintenance of the ecological balance. We would not consider earthquakes, hurricanes and typhoons as accidents or lack of foresight on the part of providence if we extend this idea of higher synthesis and recognise that occassionally it may be necessary to wipe the slate clean in limited areas to start afresh with new forms or stronger and better species of old forms. We are then driven to the conclusion that there must be one intelligence directing these diverse forces to enact this vast drama of life on earth.

---

[1] Mitra, Vihari Lal, *Yoga Vasishtha Maharamayana*, Vol. 1, p. 253.

That cosmic consciousness, *hiranyagarbha*, informs and controls the universe is evident, not only from the regularity and order we find everywhere, but even more clearly in the deviations from order and regularity. A notable exception to the rule that a substance expands when it is heated and contracts when it is cooled, is water at 4 °C. When it is cooled further it expands, contrary to the general rule, for the purpose of saving marine life in the cold climates during the winter months. If water had continued to contract beyond 4 °C, the operation of convection currents would convert the seas to blocks of ice when the atmospheric temperature went below freezing point, and all marine life would be destroyed. The operation of cosmic intelligence in our universe is so potent, and no further explanation is needed.

From *virat* or cosmic matter the *panch mahabhutas* (five grand principles) were differentiated. A wrong translation of the term *mahabhuta* as 'element' in English has caused a lot of confusion, because the term 'element' 'has a special connotation in chemistry and the *mahabhutas* do not conform to that definition. In fact, as the word *mahabhuta* implies, these are grand basic principles in the phenomenal world, and all substances, living as well as inorganic, are permutations and combinations of these. It must at this point be emphasised that the Hindu theory of creation holds that everything in creation serves a definite purpose—nothing is superfluous or unwanted. The process of emergence of the material universe from cosmic mind is briefly described as *kalpana* (ideation). Yoga philosophy gives us some indication of what probably happens in the process of creative ideation. When a yogi looks deeply into a thing he sees five layers inside.[2] At the core of any object (including the five grand principles) is purposiveness. So the purpose a thing should serve is the first step in ideation. Then comes the peculiar combination of *gunas* (characteristics) which will fulfill that purpose. This determines the proportion of mind, energy and matter that should form the object. Next comes the subtle form or mental formulation of the shape or form the object should take. Next comes the essential characteristics which the physical form should take. Finally comes the gross physical form which includes the accidental characteristics introduced by the surrounding circumstances. These characteristics will not alter the substantial nature of the object. The final product has a form, a name and specific functions. All three go together. We formulate our next law thus:

---

[2] Woods, J. H., *The Yoga System of Patanjali*, (Commenting on *Sutra* 44), Ch. III, *Vibhuti pada*, p. 273, *et. seq.*

Fourth Law: Everything in creation serves a purpose which determines the nature and composition of the Upadhi or vehicle by which the thing is manifested. Form and function are also determined by that purpose, and the name is a convenient identification tag. To put it in another way, everything in creation has a name, form and function, all of which go together.

By the operation of *shrishti kalpana* (creative ideation) the extremely tenuous mind produces undifferentiated cosmic matter or *virat*. Eventually this branches into the five grand principles or *panch mahabhutas*. As evolution proceeds matter becomes coarser and coarser. The first *mahabhuta* or grand principle to evolve was space which is the finest form of matter, but is coarser than mind. When we say that *A* is coarser than *B*, we mean that *A* can be apprehended by more sense-organs than *B*. Thus, water is coarser than air, i.e., air can only be felt by sense of touch. Water can be seen, touched and tasted. This is the sense in which we use the terms coarse and fine.

Akasa or space was the finest and earliest form of matter— a complex principle including vibration, sound and sense of hearing. But its most important function is to give substances form and keep them discrete. Vyasa, in his commentary on Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra*, 42, Chapter III, states: 'wherever there is a body (*kaya*) there is *akasa*, because it gives form (*avakasa*) to the body.'[3] The term *avakasa* also means space in the sense of place or area occupied by an object. It is appropriate to translate it as 'form' as this is precisely the area occupied by an object, and also in view of the statement in the Chandogya Upanishad (8.14.I) that *akasa* is *Namarupayoh nirvahita*—the revealer or determiner of name and form. This is confirmed by a study of the atom which shows that

[3] Ibid, p. 271. Woods in his book has translated *akasa* as 'air' and *vayu* as 'wind'. Most writers translate *akasa* as space and *vayu* as air.

the 'vast' space between the nucleus and the electrons is responsible for the form and bulk visible to our eyes. In his explanation of Vyasa's commentary on the preceding *Sutra*, Vacaspatimis'ra states: 'If there was no *akasa* the things which are *amurta* (having no specific form) would be pressed together and could not be separated even by needles. And as a result everything would be covered by everything.'[4] Thus our ancient seers explained the function of space more clearly than a popular definition as 'an interval between two or more objects', by showing that space gives form to individual objects and keeps them discrete so that they may be dealt with as individual objects.

The next *mahabhuta* in evolution was *vayu* or air representing motion, touch, and sense of touch. Time originated from motion and has no significance apart from motion. Vyasa, in his commentary on *Yoga Sutra*, 52, Chapter III, states:

> Just as the atom is the minimal limit of matter, so the moment is the minimal limit of time. Or the time taken by an atom in order to leave one point and reach the next point is a moment. The continuous flow of these is a sequence (in time). Moments and sequences of these cannot be combined into a *vastu* (real object). Hours, days and so on are combinations by a mental process. Thus, time, being of this nature, does not correspond to anything real, but is a structure by a mental process and follows as a result of perceptions or of words. To the ordinary thinking of the emergent mind it might appear as if it were real.[5]

It is worth noting that the Tamil word *kalam* has the same root as *kal* which means air as well as leg. (Along with participles the word *kal* itself is used to mean time.) The fundamental relationship between motion and time was fully appreciated by our ancients. Perhaps time may be defined as 'a function of movement in of through space'. We shall presently revert to the conceptions or space and time.

The third *mahabhuta* to evolve was fire—the principle covering heat, light, changes in form and the sense of sight. This was followed by water—including liquid state, food, taste and sense of taste. The last to come was earth representing all solid states, and

[4] Ibid., p. 270.
[5] Ibid., pp. 287 and 280.

the sense of smell. The phenomenal world consists of permutations and combinations of these and the three *gunas—rajas, tamas*, and *satva*. A little more consideration was given to the first two *mahabhutas*, space and air, to clarify Hindu conceptions of space and time which will be used in the discussion that follows. The Western concept of a four dimensional space-time continuum, which serves as a stage or a back-drop for objects and events, considers the background as independent of the objects and events—like the films in a cinema and the curtain on which they are shown. According to the Hindu concept the time and space or location of an object or event has an organic connection with the object or event. By virtue of the fact that object *O* is located in *P* at a time *T*, the object acquires certain characteristics which can be discerned even after the object moves to position *P* at time *T*. Vyasa, in his commentary on *Yoga Sutra*, 53, Chapter III, takes the case of two myrobalan fruits identical in size, shape, colour, etc., and states that however much their positions may be changed a yogi will be able to state which fruit was in which position at the beginning though he may not have seen them being moved about. 'The two myrobalans are distinct in that they pass through the incidents peculiar to their own points of space. But it is this passing through the incident belonging to another point of space that is the cause of the distinction between the two. . .But it is the difference as to the incident that is accessible to the thinking substance of the Yogi only.'[6]

Vacaspatimis'ra further pursues the example of the two myrobalan fruits to introduce the time element. Fruits *a* and *b* occupying positions *x* and *y* are moved without the yogi's knowledge so that *a* disappears altogether and *b* occupies position *x*. The yogi would still be able to say that *b* was originally in position *y* and was moved to position *x* because it underwent certain mutations earlier in position *y* and is now undergoing other mutations in position *x*. He says : 'Although at present (one of the myrobalans has such) a mutation that it is in the point of space of this (other myrobalan) still up to the present it had the mutation with reference to a different point of space. So it is the moment of the mutation of this point-of-space which distinguishes it (from the other). And this moment it is which is directly perceived by constraint'[7], i.e., yogic power. Constraint is a technical

[6] Ibid, pp. 290 and 291.

term used for concentrated exercise of mental power by yogis and is explained fully in other *yoga sutras*. Thus, according to Hindu philosophy, space and time are components of all objects and events, and cannot be separated from objects and events and conceived as a background or stage independent of the objects themselves.

Western thought conceives of both time and space as intervals between events and objects respectively. This postulates two terminii and shows preoccupation with the idea of measuring. Therefore, Western thought has missed the nature and functions of both space and time. We have already seen that space has basic functions more important than measurement. Likewise we noted that the basic concept of time is as a function of movement. Western thought uses this concept of movement and measures time in terms of days (representing the rotation of the earth) and years (representing the revolution around the sun). This concept of time in conjunction with the speed of light is extended into space, and serves to measure long distances as light years. Vyasa has described this measurement in terms of hours, days and years as a thought construct, which is different from the real time as conceived by Hindu sages. This thought construct no doubt is useful for purposes of historical record, but its usefulness beyond that is doubtful.

Hindu thought envisages a space-time-causation matrix in which all events occur and all objects exist. This space and time are not independent dimensions in a background or stage set for the events to occur. They are component elements of causation and do not exist independently of it. An event occurs or a thing appears only when all the concomitant circumstances appropriate for its occurrence are fulfilled. Our Fourth Law stated that everything in the universe serves a definite purpose which determines its form and function. Purpose in this context includes the causes which produce it and the place and time where it occurs. In other words the concept of purpose includes a niche in the vast space-time-causation matrix for the event or thing concerned. The function is needed at a specific place for a specific period of time and not forever. When the function is fulfilled the form that enables the function to be performed becomes superfluous. Then there is a change in name, form and function. To understand this let us take a simple example—there is loose earth; when a little water is added it becomes clay. Suppose our purpose is to make

---

[7] Ibid., pp. 295 and 293,

it a container of water. This purpose determines the form (viz., that of a pot) which the clay must take to perform the function of carrying water. The clay is shaped into a pot and after use is thrown away and broken up. Then the pot is not existent, only shreds are there. Loose earth—clay—pot—shreds: all these are changes in name, form and function. What we call creation and destruction are really changes in name, form and function in the space-time-causation matrix. In the series loose earth—clay—pot—shreds, each preceding item can be viewed as the cause, and the succeeding item the effect in a continuous process of evolution governed by a purpose. Things do not just make their appearance from nothing and nowhere, nor do they vanish into nothing—in other words, nothing is created *ex nihilo*. All changes in the phenomenal world are an orderly progress from cause to effect. The same considerations apply to events as well. We should also note that the effect is already implicit in the cause. Loose earth has the capacity to change into a pot. The potentiality awaits the appropriate circumstances—including time, place and the maturing of the cause—to manifest itself in the change. Let us formulate our next law thus :

Fifth Law: Creation and destruction are changes in name, form and function in the vast space-time-causation matrix, forming part of an evolution, a purpose. All changes in the phenomenal world are an orderly progress from cause to effect. The effect is already implied in the cause and awaits appropriate circumstances for its fruition and manifestation.

The events that occur do not make their appearance at the time of occurrence suddenly from nowhere. They already exist in potential form in their causes, very much like a tree in a seed. One of the problems science has in explaining—or even recognising—precognition is the assumption that future events are non-existent at present. Once it is realised that they are already existing and are awaiting unfoldment, this problem ceases and precognition becomes something analogous to the ability to see a tree in a seed. Time is one of the components in this process of the emergence of the effect from the cause, from the potential to the manifested state. In other words, causation, space and time are parts of a complete matrix from which the future is unfolding itself and manifesting what is already in a potential stage awaiting maturity and fruition. The origin of the sun, the development of the solar system, its maturity, senescence and eventual dissolution are part of this great process of unfoldment taking place in the space-time-causation matrix. Rotation of the earth and its revolution round the sun are very trivial incidents in this process. While these two factors may be used as a yardstick to measure historical time, we lose sight of the reality of time as a factor in causation because of our pre-occupation with measuring. Trying to locate future events in this scale or yardstick is also fraught with the danger of failure as there is no necessary connection between the predictable human events and the process of unfoldment of the solar system and our planet earth. The predictions, for example, of Nostradamus do not relate future events to solar time, but with other events which are joined at some point by cause-effect relationships to the predicted events. These and other forecasts of people who have a genuine vision of the future take the form of—when *X* happens *Y* will occur. However, this is not to deny that when we are close to the occurrence of events, it may often be possible to relate them to solar time and specify dates for the occurrence of events.

To sum up—space, which is the finest form of matter, emerged from mind which is even finer than space. Next came air which is slightly more coarse than space, and along with air came movement and time. Space is the factor responsible for the form of things as well as for keeping them discrete. Time comes in as a function of motion in or through space. In the space-time-causation matrix this motion is the process of unfoldment of events, marking time quite incidentally. In measurable or historical time we may choose any convenient unit as our yardstick—movement of an atom from one point to the next or the rotation or revolution of the earth. Space and time are really part of the causation phenomena determining the place and time of the manifestation of events from their potential state. All events exist long before their occurrence in potential form in the space-time-causation matrix and await appropriate circumstances for their manifestation. In this vast matrix of space-time-causation, creation and destruction are changes in name, form and function forming part of an evolutionary process and serving a definite purpose. All changes in the phenomenal world are an orderly progress from cause to effect.

Transmigration

In our First Law we stated that everything big or small, animate or inanimate, is a focal point covered by a vehicle called *upadhi*. The individual soul called *atma* or *purusha* (self) is in this focal point. It is really a spark of the great effulgent light which is *Brahman* or Absolute from which it emerged. The urge to return to *Brahman* is very strong in the individual soul or *purusha* and this is the moving force inside the soul or *purusha* irrespective of the vehicle or *upadhi* which carried it for the time being. It is this urge which is the driving force in this drama of evolution—the soul or *purusha* wanting to achieve higher and higher experience and finally merge in *Brahman* the Absolute. Encased at first in what is called inanimate matter, the soul presses forward to evolving higher forms of life through plant and animal life towards the human form which is the gateway for its final merger with the Absolute. *Hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness is an instrument of the Absolute to guide individual souls in their march towards the Absolute. This background to the great cosmic drama of evolution may be stated thus in our next two laws:

Sixth Law: Beyond and behind Hiranyagarbha or cosmic consciousness is the absolute Brahman providing it with power and direction. But Absolute Brahman is inactive and static, though it controls all activities of Hiranyagarbha.

Seventh Law: The focal point in everything in our First Law is the individual soul or Atma or Purusha. This is a spark of the supreme Brahman and has a very strong urge to return to and merge in Brahman from which it emerged. This urge is the driving force of evolution from inert matter to man and beyond to merge in Brahman.

Our body consists of five sheaths called *kosas*. The outer one called *annamaya kosa* is the physical sheath which changes with every birth. The next one inside is the *pranamaya kosa* or the energy sheath. The sheath inside it is the *manomaya kosa* or the mind sheath. Inside it is the *vijnanamaya kosa* or the intellect sheath. The innermost is the *anandamaya kosa* or the bliss sheath. Inside the last one is the *purusha* or soul. Except the outermost sheath, all the others are carried by the soul from birth to birth.

The various stages through which the individual soul has to progress are determined by the laws of *karma* (action and reaction) and the *samskaras* or impressions carried by the soul in its *manomaya kosa* or mental sheath. We shall first try to understand the operation of *karma*, and then see the role of the mind or *citta* of the individual in the application of the laws of *karma* to the individual. Stated simply, the law of *karma* says we shall reap the effects of all good or bad acts in some future existence. We enjoy or suffer now on account of what we did in our previous births or existences. This is not a defeatist or fatalist philosophy—it is one of hope and challenge telling you that the future is in your hands to be shaped by your present thoughts and actions.

Laws of Karma

Science is an attempt to understand and explain how and why various events occur in our phenomenal universe. It is based on the assumption that all these events do not occur at random and that the universe and its parts function according to certain principles and laws. As we have already seen, according to Hinduism the cosmic intelligence or *hiranyagarbha* is the built-in controlling and directing force. The progress of science has been marked by an increasing number of general laws and principles, and an increase in the area covered by these laws. Science has developed by the postulation of new hypotheses, testing them by observation and experimentation and then formulating and proving new laws. Our ancient *risis* or seers with their superhuman ability and wisdom were able to reach out to the ultimate limit, and postulated that everything that happens in the universe has both a cause and an effect. All events occur in a space-time-causation matrix and nothing happens without a cause or without an effect.

There are really two sets of causes and effects for each event—the visible and the invisible. The visible or physical causes are known to science which recognises the causal relationship by observation, experimentation and inference. The cause and effect are in temporal and/or spatial proximity and are observable. Natural laws are more clear-cut and easily handled by science. But many events are attributable to human agency or have effects on human beings. Science cannot proceed beyond the human agents and ascertain why they acted in the way they did. It is this which we refer to as the unseen causes, which have been probed by our ancient *risis* or seers. This unseen cause operates on the mental level and has two distinct types of operation: (a) It produces tendencies and mental attitudes causing individuals to act in certain ways, and (b) it draws certain effects upon the individual by actions of others, which are to a large extent induced by the conduct of the individual who draws those effects. This is somewhat similar to the accident proneness of individuals. The question to be answered is how did the minds of these individuals acquire these tendencies leading to events (a) and (b)? This the *risis* or seers attribute to what they did in some previous existence in some other place, in some other age, and they call it the law of *karma*. Let us formulate our next law thus:

Eighth Law: There are two sets of causes for objects and events in this universe (*a*) *The seen physical causes, and* (*b*) *the unseen mental causes which lead human beings to act in particular ways. These mental causes are to be found in some earlier acts of the individual* (*often in some previous existence*) *which condition his mind in a particular way.*

We noted earlier that matter and energy evolved from the mind. Mind has some Characteristics of both matter and energy. From our experience we find that it sends out thoughts—a kind of energy—to the various parts of our body, and is also capable of receiving and retaining impressions like matter. Every action and every thought leaves an impression or some scar called a *samskara* on our mind. The intensity of the scar or impression depends on the degree of our involvement in the thought or action. All *samskaras* are sure to have their effect in some way at some time—deep-set *samskaras* are the cause of events, while others merely influence our thinking. *Samskaras* aid memory in this life but remain impressed in the mind even after death, and one of the outer sheaths of the transmigrating soul—the *manomaya kosa* or mental sheath—carries these impressions indefinitely from birth to birth. These remain dormant till the conditions are suitable for fruition. Our birth, the length of life, and kind of experience are all determined by our previous actions or *karma*.[1] As we go through our present life experiencing the fruits of our earlier *karma*, we are all the time accumulating new *karma* which we have to enjoy in some future existence. Although the word *karma* means action, it includes thoughts also which are sufficiently strong to influence our mind. Thus basically our minds are storehouses of our actions and thoughts from the beginning of time; of these a part has been put into our current bank account, so to say, and this group determines our instincts, tendencies and thoughts so that we may act in a way in which our *karma* bears fruit. Now let us formulate our next laws thus:

---

[1] Woods, J. H., *The Yoga System of Patanjali*, p. 122.

Ninth Law: Every thought, word, and deed leaves on our mind some scar called Samskara. These Samskaras are carried in the mind indefinitely from birth to birth till conditions in the space-time-causation matrix become favourable for their fruition into action, and they thus get spent out. This is called the law of Karma.

Tenth Law: What happens to us is largely determined by the laws of Karma; but how we react to these events is within our choice and our acts accumulate new Karma which will bear fruit hereafter.

To understand the above we must resolve the conflict between determinism and free will in the operation of the laws of *karma*. If *karma* is the factor determining our present life, can we be held responsible for our actions which we are compelled to perform by the laws of *karma*? Broadly speaking, what happens to us is more or less determined; but how we react or what we do is largely our choice. In this connection let us look back on cosmic ideation and the explanation of causation in the previous chapter. In the evolution of an object we made a distinction between essential characteristics and accidental characteristics. Causation or *karma* is similarly concerned only with the essential characteristics of events, and accidental factors can vary. In examining the concept of causation we noted that the tree is implicit in the seed. But this does not mean that every leaf—its size and shape, and the direction in which each branch should grow—are all determined in the seed. The environment in which the tree grows will determine these accidental details. *Karma* as the causative factor in the evolution of the future is concerned with essentials and not with details. This is of considerable significance in precognition. In the well known case of Mrs. Verall's automatic writing about Marmontel's book she made remarkably accurate predictions about future events. But she did go wrong in regard to two details: (a) When Mr. Marsh was reading Marmontel's book there was no frost, and (b) the name Marmontel was inscribed on the cover.[2] Such errors are quite consistent with the Hindu theory of causation and do not in any way detract from the accuracy of Mrs. Verall's predictions.

Thus it will be noted that the laws of *karma* do not place us in a rigidly pre-determined pattern which leaves us with no choice. The changes in the process of evolution are generally studied from three angles– changes in external characteristics, changes in intensity, and changes occuring in time. The last of these is divided into two parts—changes from the past to the present, and changes from the present to the future. The changes from the past to the present are well known and fully determined. But changes from the present to the future are described as *avyapadesya* or indeterminate, because there is a wide margin for variation in details. It is here that free will is given its place. When an event occurs, it is open to us to react to it in several ways. We may be calm and react mildly without harming others or ourselves, or violently. Our reactions to events occuring in our life are determined by two impulses pulling us in different directions—the *vasanas* or tendencies shaped by our previous *karma* on the one hand, and moral tendencies deriving from the urge of the soul to merge in the Absolute *Brahman*. If we analyse our minds we would find three basic components: (a) A set of facts acquired by education and experience—mainly in this life, but including those obtained in earlier lives; (b) tendencies or *vasanas* as shaped by the *samskaras* in our minds obtained in previous existences or earlier in this very birth; and (c) moral tendencies derived from the urge of the individual soul to return to, and merge in, *Brahman* from which it has emerged. While (a) may shape our outlook, (b) and (c) may be divergent pulls—the strength of which would depend on the weight we throw with our will. Our final course of action, which will be within a wide area between these two pulls, is well within our control and choice. It is here that moral responsibility comes, and our present thoughts, words and deeds determine our future. The philosophy of *karma* is not a defeatist one asking us to be reconciled to the inevitable, but is one of hope and challenge which proclaims that the future is in our hands and depends on what we do here and now. What we do now in thought, word or deed creates new *samskaras* which will ripen

Smuthies, J.R., *Science and E.S.P.*, pp. 169 and 170.

into action in some future birth. Thus there is an endless chain of cause and effect that takes us from birth to birth. Our next law asserting our free will may be formulated thus :

Eleventh Law: Our will to act arises from, and is controlled by, our mind which consists of (a) facts gained by education and experience mainly in this birth, (b) our Vasanas or tendencies shaped by our previous Karma, and (c) moral forces deriving from the urge of the soul to return to and merge in Absolute Brahman. The final course of action resulting from the interplay of these three divergent forces is within our choice, and this fixes moral responsibility on us. Our present thoughts, words and deeds constitute new Karma and shape our future.

Some events in our lives are clearly due to the action of more than one man, and the question naturally arises: 'How do you apportion this event to the past *karmas* of the individuals?' Most often the events serve to fulfill the *karmic* destiny of the other individuals too and they are brought together to share it with the major actors in the event. Thus we observe that space and time become carefully coordinated instruments in the operation of *karmic* laws. As we saw earlier these are also evolutes from the cosmic intelligence *hiranyagarbha* and are part and parcel of the space-time-causation matrix and of our existence—not that we are living in space and time, which have an independent existence. The entire Universe is one substance, one energy, as we saw at the beginning of this book.

The Functioning of the Mind

The mind of the individual comes into this existence or birth with a load of *samskaras* most of which remain dormant, except for the portion forming the 'current account'. The purpose of providing man with a mind, its *raison d'être*, is to provide the *purusa* (soul) with experience, so that, in the course of evolution, it may discriminate and recognise the soul as distinct from the body-mind complex, and thus pave the way to *mukti* (liberation). The only point of contact between the individual and the world outside is the mind. It functions mainly in three ways : (a) receiving information, (b) coordinating it with previous data and making a judgement, and (c) deciding what should be done and then executing these decisions. In (a) the mind is assisted by the sense organs and in (c) by the organs of action. In (b) it receives assistance from the faculty of determination called *buddhi*.

Before examining the process of knowing let us consider the philosophy of knowing. The knower, the object known, and the process of knowing are all part of the vast field of universal consciousness as we saw in our First Law. It is because the knower and the known are focal points in this universal field, that the knower is able to contact the known through it. In other words, the knower cannot establish contact with any object that is outside this field of consciousness. The subject (knower) and the object (known) are influencing each other, and the process of knowing is one of these transactions between them. Western philosophy (action under the Cartesian dichotomy of mind and matter) is struggling to study the connection between the brain and the mind. In the process of knowing they understand the steps leading to the object making an impact on the brain. Prof Margenau states the difficulty thus: 'Now the miracle in all this, at the present time, does not reside within the field of interaction between the object and the body; the miracle occurs when anything that has taken place in the body emerges within consciousness. . . That miracle is the conversion of a physiological stimulus into a conscious response. . . There is no theory of cause and effect which can validly, fruitfully, contain this kind of transition.'[1] Once we discard the mind-matter dichotomy and realise that mind is only a finer form of matter the miracle will disappear. The relation between the brain and the mind will be seen as similar to the relation between a basin of water and the water vapour above it, with constant interaction between the two. Science has long recognised the influence of the mind on the body in psychosomatic illnesses. But recently Harvard University researchers were reported to be studying the effect of transcendental meditation on body metabolism. By meditation the body and the nervous system are calmed and the results are better than those produced by drugs. In other words, a conscious effort of the mind produces changes in the body as desired.

Let us examine the process of receiving information, corresponding to cognition in modern psychology, in some detail. The sense organs which assist the mind are by their very nature and origin connected to the objects in the phenomenal world and are drawn towards them. When a sense organ establishes contact with an object, an impression is created in the mind which Vyasa describes thus in his commentary on *Yoga-Sutra* 41, Chapter I: 'The mind stuff is influenced by referring to the object to be known and comes into a state of balance by referring to the object to be known and appears as having the form of the object to be known as it is in itself.' The mind assumes the form of the object of its attention in three functions : (a) it is the third stage in creation by cosmic ideation when there is a mental formulation of the object;* (b) when a thing is remembered by the mind; (c) when a thing is known by direct sight. This change of form of the mind itself is the basis of knowledge. Thus an idea is presented to the soul or *purusa* and only when its light illumines the mind is the object known by the individual. Without the aid of the soul the mind is incapable of knowing anything. The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad[2] describes *purusa* as the light within which illumines the intellect which continues to function and direct the mind even after the organs are stilled in deep sleep.

Hindu philosophy considers that a complete understanding of the mind is possible only when we study it in all the three states in which it functions—when we are wide awake, when we are

[1] Smythies, J.R., *Science and E.S.P.*, p. 217.

* See p. 8.

[2] Book 4, Chapter 3, section 7.

dreaming in light sleep, when we are in deep sleep. The light or soul within functions in all the three states. When we are awake its illumination is necessary to produce knowledge. But the wide awake state is the one in which its power is lowest as the mind is wholly involved in the external world and is least responsive to the light within us. In the dream state the light has more control and in the deep sleep state, when the external world is completely shut off from the mind, this control is greater. There is a further stage—that of deep meditation—called the fourth state (*turiya*) when the light within is in maximum control. At first it may look puzzling to be told that our mind is more powerful in deep sleep than when we are awake. But if we look at our experience and that of others, we will find we have often 'slept' over problems and found the solution the following day! This is because the light within or the soul or higher faculty in us does not go to sleep but remains active and the brain functions at a subliminal level. Professor Price and others have observed a problem in extra-sensory transmission of information: 'It looks as if telepathically received impressions had some difficulty in crossing the threshold and manifesting themselves in consciousness.'[3] This is because the wide awake state of the mind is the least powerful one. On the other hand these extra-sensory messages come out more easily and clearly in dreams as the mind is not in contact with the outside world and is more receptive to extra-sensory messages. The net effect of all this discussion is the recognition that the power behind our minds and brains is the little light within us or the soul and without its aid the mind is powerless. This is the spark from the Absolute and is the core of our being, around which our body has been fashioned. This spark is a focal point in the Universal field of Consciousness which we spoke of at the beginning of this book.

The new information is analysed and sifted and our *buddhi* or intellect decides whether the new information can be accepted or is to be rejected. It is this final idea that is presented to the *purusa* or soul—the light within us which sheds light on this—and there is the flash of illumination or new knowledge. Our intellect or *buddhi* is closest to the soul or *atma* in the same way as *hiranyagarbha* is close to *Brahman*. It is the function of the intellect to interpret the pull of the soul towards *Brahman* in terms of actions in our day-to-day lives, and this interpretation is what is called

[3] Smythies, ibid., p. 41.

conscience. This has been growing since the beginning of evolution, but has been intensified and strengthened in the human form. Though intellect is a product of the mind, it is capable of turning inward and examining the mind and its operation and making a critical analysis.

The faculty of discrimination or *buddhi* in the individual is the counterpart of the cosmic intelligence and it is this that pronounces judgement on various events coming within our knowledge. This involves the reference of the new piece of information to the existing stock of knowledge (which includes our scheme of values) and making comparisons before a final judgement is made. Although this faculty of discrimination has its origins in the mind it can be turned inwards introspectively and made to examine the functioning of the mind and control it. This is peculiar to human beings and affords the only hope for us to rise above the human level and reach upwards towards liberation. As *buddhi's* control over our volition becomes more and more effective we avoid actions not conducive to liberation and incline towards actions in conformity with our *dharma* (duty), leading us towards liberation. *Buddhi* is illuminated by the light from *purusa*, and because of its rather important and unique role our ancient seers recognised this as a separate entity and stated that this is the *vijnanamaya kosa* situated inside the mind sheath. There is no other instrument available to us to control the mind and we shall revert to this subject in greater detail later.

The third function of the mind is deciding on a course of action and executing it. This covers conation and affection of modern psychology. This function is influenced to a great extent by *vasanas* or innate tendencies which result from the *samskaras* ready for fruition in this birth. Our performance also depends to a large extent on our innate abilities which can be improved or canalised by education and training. Our *vasanas* (tendencies) express themselves as desires for various objects and experiences and determine our general conduct—subject to the reservation that our desires can be tamed, controlled and canalised by our faculty of discrimination if it is properly strengthened. The last stage of mental activity is the issuing of instructions to the organs of action to do or not to do certain specific acts directed to the achievement of desired objectives.

Escape from Karma

Our *manomaya kosa* or mind sheath is the storehouse of all our past thoughts and deeds extending back to the beginning of time; out of these, that part which is due for fruition in this birth provides us with our basic drives. Our mind receives information through our sense organs and reacts through our organs of action producing new *samskaras* which will make it necessary for us to take future births for the fruition of these and the unspent balances of *karma* already in our minds. But the mind is also capable of looking at itself and regulating our activities according to our highest standards. Herein lies our hope of getting out of this cycle of births and deaths by acting in conformity with our *dharma*. *Dharma* is the course of conduct laid down by the *Sastras* and designed for the progress of both the individual and society.

Dharma, often translated as duty, is really a grand concept applicable to the entirety of the universe, laying down the most appropriate course for every thing and every individual. This is the course of conduct that will maximise the benefits for the individual or thing concerned and for the rest of the universe as well. It may sound strange when we speak of *dharma* or duty for inanimate things. But in Hindu philosophy it is the *dharma* (or duty) of fire to burn as much as it is our *dharma* to speak the truth; it is the *dharma* of water to flow as much as it is our *dharma* to help fellow beings to the best of our abilities. In our Fourth Law we noticed that everything serves a purpose. The *dharma* of a thing or individual is that course of action which will ensure the maximum fulfilment of that purpose, and thus maximise the good of the individual concerned and that of the universe in general. We may formulate our next law thus:

Twelfth Law: Everything, animate or inanimate, has to follow in this world a course of action and conduct called Dharma derived from the purpose which the thing, has to serve, as stated in our Fourth Law. This course of conduct will produce maximum benefit both for the thing concerned and for the rest of the universe. In most cases compliance with Dharma is routine and the word Dharma has a secondary meaning, 'external characteristics'. As man has been *given freedom of action, as explained in our Eleventh Law, in human conduct Dharma has become a moral standard to be achieved. Dharma derived from purposiveness or Arthavatva is not only divinely ordained, but a part of divinity itself.*

In inanimate things *dharma* is not a matter of choice, but is determined for them. In science and philosophy we identify these characteristics as properties of things and hence the Sanskrit word *dharma* has a secondary meaning 'external characteristics'. In animals there is very little choice—they conform to their nature largely, and erratic conduct is only occasional. But the degree of freedom and movement increases as we come up the scale of life and reaches fullness in man. We compared earlier in this book this process of evolution to the hop, step, and jump of athletics. The earlier stages represent the athelete's initial run and no special effort is necessary—steady compliance with the laws of existence is enough. *Dharma* is therefore no more than routine compliance with the nature of things. When the final spurt is required for the jump, man is given maximum freedom to put in the effort, but the risk of misuse is there. In fact there is more misuse than proper use. Says Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba: 'Among things endowed with consciousness or *chaitanya*, plants, insects, birds, or mammals—all have managed to treasure their specific *dharma* unaffected by passage of time. But man whose intelligence sweeps from the inert and the infinitesimal to the super-conscious and the universal is the only thing that has slipped and is sliding down.'[1] The same conclusion is reached by the psychiatrist, Trigant Burrow:

> Common laws and principles are operative throughout nature. Through these laws and principles, phenomena are related effectively and meaningfully. Whether in Physics, Astronomy or Ecology, there is a coordination of inter-acting parts into a totality of structure and function. By and large, electrons and protons react in an orderly way; the spheres remain within their appointed orbits; and an effective balance is maintained among the various organisms and their environment. It is only in the field of human behaviour that this primary orderliness does not seem to apply. It is only in man's relation to man that there exists confusion worse confounded.[2]

---

[1] *Satya Sai Speaks*, Vol. III, p. 218.

[2] Burrow, Trigant, *The Preconscious Basis of Human Experience*, p. 149.

Trigant Burrow found from his research that there was in man a deep seated urge for truth and symmetry, for love and helpfulness, for cooperation with fellow beings and work for the universal good. This then is his real nature, which has been thwarted and stifled by the intervention of selfishness. Conflict and greed are the result of this selfishness. But his real nature is what is described in Hinduism as his *dharma*, in the same way as water's *dharma* is to flow and fire's *dharma* is to burn.

So much for the philosophy of *dharma*. But in practical terms what is *dharma*? What are we expected to do? Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba says: '*Dharma* is not imported from somewhere outside nor can it be removed. It is your own genuine nature, your uniqueness. It is the thing which makes a man out of an animal. How to observe *Dharma*? By being yourself.'[3] Elsewhere he states that *dharma* is the code of law designed for the progress of society and the individual and the basic *dharma* is the *atma dharma*. This means that the basis for *dharma* is the recognition that we are all sparks of the same divinity and should base our conduct on that recognition. The implications of this are manifold. We should love all beings in the same way as we love ourselves and make no artificial distinctions on grounds of colour, creed, caste, wealth or social status; we should not get angry with or harm others or treat them with disrespect; even inanimate things should be handled with care and not tossed about; we should do unto others as we would be done by, and we should not claim any special privileges, etc. When Sai Baba says that *dharma* is the code for the progress of society too, he emphasises our duties to society arising from our position within it. This aspect we shall consider presently. But we should note that by relating the course of conduct (*dharma*) of a thing or being to its very core of purposiveness, we show not only that *dharma* is divinely ordained, but part of divinity itself.

Activity is an inevitable part of our existence. No one can ever remain really actionless even for a moment, for everyone is helplessly driven to action by the *guna*s which are innate in man. The universe is a gigantic wheel or workshop where each individual has to play his part. Only when each individual makes his full contribution will the wheel of life turn smoothly. We use in our day-to-day life the many facilities that are offered to us by society—both organised (State organs) and unorganised. But

[3] Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba, *Geeta Vahini*, p. 52.

we facilely take them for granted and do not appreciate that we owe a debt to society. This debt can be repaid only by our discharging to the best of our ability our *dharma*—the duties and functions attached to our station in life. He who takes from society what it offers to him without returning what is due from him, is really a thief as pointed out in the Bhagavad Gita. It is not enough to do the minimum work and salve our conscience by feeling we have done our little bit. Improving one's skills to achieve excellence in performance (*Karmasu Kausalam* of the Bhagavad Gita) is part of this work worship expected of us. This philosophy thus requires us to keep our jobs in our stations in society and play our part with full zest and fervour and does not require us to run away from society as a recluse or renounce our role in it.

Many who seek to escape from the round of re-births choose renunciation of normal wordly life as the way out. Not only is this difficult for the large majority, but it is also unnecessary to achieve. The Bhagavad Gita enjoins the individual to stay in his station in life and carry out his duties in a spirit of dedication, without trying to secure the fruits of his acts. This philosophy of life can be understood from the laws we have already formulated. Our Ninth Law states that every thought, word, and deed leaves on our mind some scar called *samskara*. These are related to our motives and mental processes preceding the action rather than to the physical manifestation of the action. The motives that lead us to action, the plans we make before action, the result we hope to obtain as a result of the action will figure as prominently in the *samskaras* as our involvement with them in the period before action. Thus, the *samskaras* produced in the mind of a surgeon who plunges his knife into the body of a patient will be different from those produced in the mind of a murderer doing the same act. Our motives, our desires for certain fruits from our action, leave deep *samskaras* which drag us further and further into worldliness. If our desire for the results of our acts were not so strong, the *samskaras* too would be superficial and not deep seated. To reduce and even eliminate this involvement, the Bhagavad Gita puts forward the proposal that we renounce desire for results of our actions and do them as a matter of duty (*karmayoga*). This is not as easy as it looks. We must view the situation objectively and recognise that the law of the situation requires something to be done and circumstances so conspire that we happen to be the persons doing it. What has to be done should be done irrespective of profit or loss or any inconvenience. With a little training of our conscience we would be able to do a few things; but we may fail in facing hard tasks. Each time we act according to our conscience against desires and temptations, our conscience gets strengthened; and each time we surrender to temptation our conscience gets weakened. As our conscience is strengthened, our ability to do what is right increases and our failures decrease gradually. If we are serious about not adding to our *karmic* load, we should find a way of avoiding these failures as well. Let us formulate our next law thus:

Thirteenth Law: Our Samskaras are shaped by our motives and desires for results, rather than by the acts themselves. When acts are done from a sense of duty, the desires for worldly experiences are reduced and thus also the need for future births to undergo those experiences.

Desires

When there is a conflict between our duty and our inclination, it is our desires that tilt the balance towards inclination. All our desires are in the ultimate analysis connected with some requirement or the other for our physical bodies. The root cause of desires is our identifying ourselves with this body and failing to recognise that it is only an outer garment—one of several thousands we have used in the past. This identification is also the cause of *asmita* or sense of egotism—the idea that 'I am the doer'. Are we right in identifying ourselves with this physical body? For one thing it is sure to perish but we hope to continue to exist in some form or other thereafter too. It has already undergone many changes from infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, etc., and yet we recognise ourselves as some unchanging common factor that has persisted throughout. It is no doubt very important as our identification tag and our means of contact with the phenomenal world. But we are surely something more than this tag, in the same way as workers are something more than the names or numbers by which they are identified in a factory—there is a reality behind this body.

Our physical body is controlled in various ways by our mind.

Can the mind be the real 'I' ? We all experience three states everyday—wakefulness, dreams and deep sleep. When dreaming we are not conscious of the physical world, but our subconscious continues to function. In deep sleep both the conscious and the subconscious cease to function. Yet there is a continuity factor which ties up all these three states of the mind and tells us we slept badly or well, or we had good dreams or bad, etc. So there is this constant factor behind the mind which is the *purusa* or the eternal witness, as we noted earlier. Though as an intellectual exercise, most of us are aware that the soul or *purusa* is the real 'I', this recognition is not an active presence controlling and conditioning our actions. The result is that most of our actions continue to be oriented towards body consciousness and physical satisfaction. This is because our *buddhi* or discriminatory faculty is not sufficiently and effectively infused with this idea that we are not this body-mind complex. The strength of character of an individual depends on the strength of *buddhi* manifesting as conscience, which requires constant cultivation. Every time there is a conflict between duty and desire, the faculty of discrimination should be strengthened by a repetition of this home truth that we are not the body. Everytime we say let desire have its way this once, we are weakening the faculty of discrimination.

Desire can never be overcome by satisfying it, and it is ignorance of this that prompts the attitude of 'this once only'. For one thing no man has the means of satisfying all his desires. Some desires lead to other desires as instruments for procuring objects of the original desires. But very soon desires begin to multiply and the means become ends in themselves and lead to further desires. Even where some desires have been satisfied new ones spring up. The only practical course is to tone up the censor motor in our minds and keep it active asking questions like 'why is this necessary', 'what will happen if you don't have it', and eliminate all unnecessary or harmful items. This does appear to be a kill-joy attitude to life. The real trouble is with our values which build up pleasure as the most desirable end in the sensory world. This is because we do not know what pleasure is and what the difference between pleasure and bliss is.

Pleasure

Pleasure relates to the body and bliss to the spirit. Pleasure is a state of excitement which cannot last and must necessarily be short-lived. It is generally a response to an external stimulus which is desired for the excitement it triggers off. The over excitement of the nerves necessarily produces its reaction—the inevitable hangover. Pleasure cannot be separated from its counterpart; excitement and pain both are really the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Pleasure is described as an interval between two pains to emphasise this close connection between the two. You cannot have pleasure without pain. Bliss on the other hand transcends these opposites and does not involves any excitement. It is a state of calmness and satisfaction which can continue indefinitely and is not dependent on outside stimuli triggering off excitement. Often these stimuli of pleasure cause damage to the body—like liquor or even over-eating. The build up of these pleasures as a social value makes them attractive even at the price of upsetting our health. Eating is necessary to keep and maintain bodily and mental health and at a reasonable level it gives satisfaction. But many eat varieties and quantities of food that are harmful to the body and mind, purely for the pleasure it gives them and then seek to restore health by taking digestive or laxative tablets. This is plainly irrational and a deliberate suppression of our faculty of discrimination though in a small way. Is a standard of values which approves and encourages this attitude to pleasure, rational and desirable ?

In assessing such a scale of values, the basic question is whether we are going to control our mind or allow the mind to control us. The measure of our culture is the extent to which we are able to control and regulate our feelings. The man who gives uncontrolled vent to his feelings is led to commit crimes and anti-social acts, which are rightly condemned by society. We recognise that reason and discrimination should control our feelings and guide our conduct. Should not pleasure of various sorts be devalued so as to subjugate them to reason ? This competitive and uncontrolled pursuit of pleasure, we have seen, leads to crimes and anti-social activities. The primacy of reason and this faculty of discrimination, so peculiar to human beings, should be maintained in all fields at all times. If this faculty is habitually suppressed and dwarfed, the transmigrating soul emerging from this life may possibly not be fit to take a human birth. It may therefore take birth as an animal in keeping with the stage of development of its *buddhi* or intellect. This kind of atavism or throw back is recognised by our theory of evolution as it is concerned with the evolution of the individual and not with the evolution of the species. The birth that a soul takes will be appropriate to the level of evolution of the discriminating faculty so that it may grow further and progress towards the liberation of the soul. Unusually gifted animals like dogs and horses performing tasks far beyond the ability associated with those species, have baffled scientists. Could they not be human beings reverted as animals in a later birth because they had degraded their discriminating faculty ? In that event their minds would retain the memories of their performances as human beings and help them in their extraordinary feats.

We dealt with this problem of desires and identification with the body at some length, as there is a deep-seated bias in the world of today towards treating the search for pleasure as the be all and end all of life and our thinking has been considerably warped by this attitude. So many assumptions accepted readily by most men are based on this attitude, and any change would require a questioning of these basic assumptions and values and re-thinking of the whole situation afresh. The gravity of the situation can be gauged from the fact that in the United States and elsewhere, despite clear evidence of the harmfulness of cigarette smoking and the campaign mounted against it, the consumption of cigarettes is increasing annually and more and more people are taking to it. A similar situation prevails with regard to the consumption of alcohol, though this campaign is as yet at its beginning. The defects of these campaigns is that they are directed against isolated items projecting from a base, and ignoring the base itself. The campaign, to be successful, must be directed against the attitude of mind which fosters and encourages these habits. There must be propaganda for a rational way of life, for a life in which our human faculty of discrimination and judgement is given the ruling place. Though difficult, such a re-orientation is necessary for the safety and sanity of the human race.

Our aim in adhering to the path of duty is to ensure that we translated *moola prakrti* as primordial nature or cosmic power. The phenomenal world is a combination of mind, matter and energy. All three developed and evolved from *moola prakrti* which represents a stage when all three remained undifferentiated in one form which may be conveniently described as *primordial nature*. The term cosmic power is more in accord with the Hindu concept of *sakti* (power). The content of *moola prakrti* is something from which, by a process of differentiation, are evolved *hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness, *prana* or cosmic energy and *tirat* or cosmic matter. This original something consists of *satva* corresponding to consciousness, *rajas* corresponding to energy and *tamas* corresponding to matter. Though these three are called *gunas* meaning characteristics, they are really the warp and the woof of *moola prakrti* and not its qualities. The very nature of *maya* is limitation and differentiation. Therefore, the consciousness of *hiranyagarbha* is a limited consciousness as against *cit* of *Brahman* which is unlimited and *a-manah* or mindless. Likewise, other evolutes of *moola prakrti* are also subject to limitation. This brief account of *moola prakrti* or *maya* gives us an idea of the instrument that *Brahman* is using in creating, protecting and destroying the phenomenal world.

What is the relationship between *Brahman* on the one hand and *sakti* or *maya* or *moola prakrti* (all three names refer to the same phenomenon) on the other ? *Brahman* is the Absolute, one without a second, as the ultimate power must be one, and cannot be more than one. The Absolute is by definition universal, eternal and infinite—without any limitations. The phenomenal world, with everything limited in all sorts of ways, is, we have seen, an emanation from *Brahman*. The question naturally arises how the universal, eternal and infinite can produce the particular, the temporary and the limited. There must be an intermediate factor which shares the characteristics of both the infinite and the finite, which introduces limitations on the emanations from the infinite—this factor is *sakti*. Since *Brahman* is one without a second there can be no other source for *sakti*. It must itself be an emanation from *Brahman*, a part and parcel of it. *Brahman*, we have noted, is the unchanging permanent background, the static, while *sakti* is the dynamic ever-changing aspect of one and the same reality. In other words there is no structural separation between the two—only a functional differentiation, like the north and south poles of a faculty is habitually suppressed and dwarfed, the transmigrating soul emerging from this life may possibly not be fit to take a human birth. It may therefore take birth as an animal in keeping with the stage of development of its *buddhi* or intellect. This kind of atavism or throw back is recognised by our theory of evolution as it is concerned with the evolution of the individual and not with the evolution of the species. The birth that a soul takes will be appropriate to the level of evolution of the discriminating faculty so that it may grow further and progress towards the liberation of the soul. Unusually gifted animals like dogs and horses performing tasks far beyond the ability associated with those species, have baffled scientists. Could they not be human beings reverted as animals in a later birth because they had degraded their discriminating faculty ? In that event their minds would retain the memories of their performances as human beings and help them in their extraordinary feats.

We dealt with this problem of desires and identification with the body at some length, as there is a deep-seated bias in the world of today towards treating the search for pleasure as the be all and end all of life and our thinking has been considerably warped by this attitude. So many assumptions accepted readily by most men are based on this attitude, and any change would require a questioning of these basic assumptions and values and re-thinking of the whole situation afresh. The gravity of the situation can be gauged from the fact that in the United States and elsewhere, despite clear evidence of the harmfulness of cigarette smoking and the campaign mounted against it, the consumption of cigarettes is increasing annually and more and more people are taking to it. A similar situation prevails with regard to the consumption of alcohol, though this campaign is as yet at its beginning. The defects of these campaigns is that they are directed against isolated items projecting from a base, and ignoring the base itself. The campaign, to be successful, must be directed against the attitude of mind which fosters and encourages these habits. There must be propaganda for a rational way of life, for a life in which our human faculty of discrimination and judgement is given the ruling place. Though difficult, such a re-orientation is necessary for the safety and sanity of the human race.

Our aim in adhering to the path of duty is to ensure that we translated *moola prakrti* as primordial nature or cosmic power. The phenomenal world is a combination of mind, matter and energy. All three developed and evolved from *moola prakrti* which represents a stage when all three remained undifferentiated in one form which may be conveniently described as *primordial nature*. The term cosmic power is more in accord with the Hindu concept of *sakti* (power). The content of *moola prakrti* is something from which, by a process of differentiation, are evolved *hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness, *prana* or cosmic energy and *tirat* or cosmic matter. This original something consists of *satva* corresponding to consciousness, *rajas* corresponding to energy and *tamas* corresponding to matter. Though these three are called *gunas* meaning characteristics, they are really the warp and the woof of *moola prakrti* and not its qualities. The very nature of *maya* is limitation and differentiation. Therefore, the consciousness of *hiranyagarbha* is a limited consciousness as against *cit* of *Brahman* which is unlimited and *a-manah* or mindless. Likewise, other evolutes of *moola prakrti* are also subject to limitation. This brief account of *moola prakrti* or *maya* gives us an idea of the instrument that *Brahman* is using in creating, protecting and destroying the phenomenal world.

What is the relationship between *Brahman* on the one hand and *sakti* or *maya* or *moola prakrti* (all three names refer to the same phenomenon) on the other ? *Brahman* is the Absolute, one without a second, as the ultimate power must be one, and cannot be more than one. The Absolute is by definition universal, eternal and infinite—without any limitations. The phenomenal world, with everything limited in all sorts of ways, is, we have seen, an emanation from *Brahman*. The question naturally arises how the universal, eternal and infinite can produce the particular, the temporary and the limited. There must be an intermediate factor which shares the characteristics of both the infinite and the finite, which introduces limitations on the emanations from the infinite—this factor is *sakti*. Since *Brahman* is one without a second there can be no other source for *sakti*. It must itself be an emanation from *Brahman*, a part and parcel of it. *Brahman*, we have noted, is the unchanging permanent background, the static, while *sakti* is the dynamic ever-changing aspect of one and the same reality. In other words there is no structural separation between the two—only a functional differentiation, like the north and south poles of a magnet acting differently. To emphasise this aspect this we may express it in another way: within the vast reservoir of power, there is a polarisation of forces—one part of this vast power remains static, while the other becomes dynamic. The first stage is the cognition of this change—Hindu philosophy describes this as the stage where static *Brahman* thinks of itself as 'I' and recognises *sakti*, the dynamic part as 'this'. Arthur Avalon, in his book *Serpent Power*'[1] describes these changes in detail in terms of Tantric Monism, a system of Hindu philosophy. This is the beginning of dualism or separation. As *srishti sankalpa* or creative ideation ripens, the *samskara* or memory impressions of previous creations come to the fore. In this connection it must be explained that creation is not a once for all process. In Hinduism the cycle of creation or evolution and destruction or involution are repeated many, many times. These *samskaras* in the *sakti* lead to a 'desire' to create or evolve various names and forms as in previous cycles. This concern with the phenomenal world and its evolution causes a loosening of the sense of identity with *Brahman* and the appearance of a sense of separation—an identification of *sakti* or *prakrti* as a separate entity. That is why in explaining that *sakti* is the means whereby the phenomenal world is created and controlled, we speak of it figuratively as an 'instrument' of *Brahman* when it is in fact a part and parcel of it. The phenomenal universe which evolves from *sakti* is really a product of the dynamic aspect of *Brahman*. To emphasise this, philosophers compare the universe to a wave in the ocean of *Brahman*. As *sakti* is the proximate source of the origin of the universe, the *Puranas* describe *sakti* as the mother of the universe called *Kali* or *Durga*.

We have already seen that *hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness evolved from *moola prakrti* and that *hiranyagarbha* controls the universe. The sources of power of both *moola prakrti* and *hiranyagarbha* is the static *Brahman* of which they are part. This brief account of the conversion of a part of *Brahman* into *sakti* and the earlier description of the evolution of the universe from *prakrti*, should help to clarify the Vedantic concept that this entire universe is *Brahman*, one substance, one energy, one mind. The teaching that *Brahman* is immanent in everything in the universe is not a metaphorical description, but a plain statement

[1] Avalon, Arthur, *The Serpent Power*, p. 33 *et seq.*

changes in intensity. These three are not separate changes, but different aspects of the same change. In a tree a bud changes into a blossom, and when it falls there is a tender fruit which becomes larger, ripens and falls from the tree. The changes from bud-to blossom-to tender fruit-to larger fruit-to ripe fruit-to falling from the tree, are changes in external characteristics or *dharma parinama*. The changes that occur in the same stage—say that of fruit—changes in colour of the skin, of the tenderness of the pulp, in the size of the fruit, are changes in intensity or *avastha parinama*. The various changes from bud to the falling of the fruit can be viewed as changes in a period of time or *lakshana parinama* and also as having a cause-effect relationship, i.e., bud is the cause of the blossom, is the cause of the tender fruit, etc., down the series to the falling of the ripe fruit. It is this view which will help us to realise that the same power that causes the tree to bloom also causes the fruit to fall; that the eventual falling of the ripe fruit is implicit in the bloom and is a necessary sequence, and that there is no antagonism between the blooming and the falling of the fruit. Everything that has a beginning must have an end, and everything that is born must die. Death is implicit in birth and is neither a sudden event nor a catastrophe. The development has been gradual though not known to us. When we look back over the ages, we realise that this is not the first death we are facing; that we have died *n* times and discarded an equal number of bodies. The present body is one more dress worn by the soul and must be discarded when it gets worn out. From the angle of society too death is as necessary as birth and, though they appear contradictory, there is a higher synthesis for the benefit and progress of society. Even from the individual's point of view birth and death are stages in the progress of the pilgrim soul and are neither the beginning nor the end of existence. Birth and death become links in a chain whose origin or end we are unable to fathom with our rational minds. Today the minds of all educated men can readily see the progress of evolution through birth, existence for a period and death, as concepts of evolutionary development so common in our experience. Detailed explanations are no longer necessary to convince them that birth and death can form part of a system governed by certain universal laws.

Hitherto we have been dealing with events in the physical world magnet acting differently. To emphasise this aspect this we may express it in another way: within the vast reservoir of power, there is a polarisation of forces—one part of this vast power remains static, while the other becomes dynamic. The first stage is the cognition of this change—Hindu philosophy describes this as the stage where static *Brahman* thinks of itself as 'I' and recognises *sakti*, the dynamic part as 'this'. Arthur Avalon, in his book *Serpent Power*'[1] describes these changes in detail in terms of Tantric Monism, a system of Hindu philosophy. This is the beginning of dualism or separation. As *srishti sankalpa* or creative ideation ripens, the *samskara* or memory impressions of previous creations come to the fore. In this connection it must be explained that creation is not a once for all process. In Hinduism the cycle of creation or evolution and destruction or involution are repeated many, many times. These *samskaras* in the *sakti* lead to a 'desire' to create or evolve various names and forms as in previous cycles. This concern with the phenomenal world and its evolution causes a loosening of the sense of identity with *Brahman* and the appearance of a sense of separation—an identification of *sakti* or *prakrti* as a separate entity. That is why in explaining that *sakti* is the means whereby the phenomenal world is created and controlled, we speak of it figuratively as an 'instrument' of *Brahman* when it is in fact a part and parcel of it. The phenomenal universe which evolves from *sakti* is really a product of the dynamic aspect of *Brahman*. To emphasise this, philosophers compare the universe to a wave in the ocean of *Brahman*. As *sakti* is the proximate source of the origin of the universe, the *Puranas* describe *sakti* as the mother of the universe called *Kali* or *Durga*.

We have already seen that *hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness evolved from *moola prakrti* and that *hiranyagarbha* controls the universe. The sources of power of both *moola prakrti* and *hiranyagarbha* is the static *Brahman* of which they are part. This brief account of the conversion of a part of *Brahman* into *sakti* and the earlier description of the evolution of the universe from *prakrti*, should help to clarify the Vedantic concept that this entire universe is *Brahman*, one substance, one energy, one mind. The teaching that *Brahman* is immanent in everything in the universe is not a metaphorical description, but a plain statement changes in intensity. These three are not separate changes, but different aspects of the same change. In a tree a bud changes into a blossom, and when it falls there is a tender fruit which becomes larger, ripens and falls from the tree. The changes from bud-to blossom–to tender fruit–to larger fruit–to ripe fruit–to falling from the tree, are changes in external characteristics or *dharma parinama.* The changes that occur in the same stage—say that of fruit—changes in colour of the skin, of the tenderness of the pulp, in the size of the fruit, are changes in intensity or *avastha parinama.* The various changes from bud to the falling of the fruit can be viewed as changes in a period of time or *lakshana parinama* and also as having a cause-effect relationship, i.e., bud is the cause of the blossom, is the cause of the tender fruit, etc., down the series to the falling of the ripe fruit. It is this view which will help us to realise that the same power that causes the tree to bloom also causes the fruit to fall; that the eventual falling of the ripe fruit is implicit in the bloom and is a necessary sequence, and that there is no antagonism between the blooming and the falling of the fruit. Everything that has a beginning must have an end, and everything that is born must die. Death is implicit in birth and is neither a sudden event nor a catastrophe. The development has been gradual though not known to us. When we look back over the ages, we realise that this is not the first death we are facing; that we have died *n* times and discarded an equal number of bodies. The present body is one more dress worn by the soul and must be discarded when it gets worn out. From the angle of society too death is as necessary as birth and, though they appear contradictory, there is a higher synthesis for the benefit and progress of society. Even from the individual's point of view birth and death are stages in the progress of the pilgrim soul and are neither the beginning nor the end of existence. Birth and death become links in a chain whose origin or end we are unable to fathom with our rational minds. Today the minds of all educated men can readily see the progress of evolution through birth, existence for a period and death, as concepts of evolutionary development so common in our experience. Detailed explanations are no longer necessary to convince them that birth and death can form part of a system governed by certain universal laws.

---

[1] Avalon, Arthur, *The Serpent Power*, p. 33 *et seq.*

Hitherto we have been dealing with events in the physical world and their being governed by universal laws of science. This is so well known to the scientific mind that these paragraphs might have verged on the platitudinous. They are really the jumping board for applying similar considerations in the spiritual field—in the study of the doctrine of grace and allied topics by examining specific concepts. Great seers of all religions have affirmed from experience that God is so full of mercy and grace, and he is only waiting for man to turn Godward; if you take one step towards Him, He will take ten steps towards you. How will this tie up with an abstract notion of God as *sat-cit-ananda*? We concluded earlier that God could not act with His hands and feet in dealing with this extremely large multiplicity of physical events. Could He be dealing with spiritual events separately as his province? How many millions of *bhaktas* (devotees) must be on earth at various stages of evolution, and how many more in other solar systems and in non-physical states of existence? Could it be that God is using some universal laws here too? In turning Godward we are following the normal process of the evolution of man towards his goal—manifesting the divinity latent and immanent in him. As by turning Godward we are, so to say, swimming with the current, it has been found by seers from experience that the progress gets automatically accelerated—very much like gravity accelerating the speed of subjects falling towards the earth at 32 ft. per sec^2. The approach to the goal was quicker than was thought at the beginning, and the seers dramatically presented the phenomenon by saying God takes ten steps if you take one towards Him. We have already noticed that each of us carries in his mental sheath of *manomaya kosa* the record of all our past doings and that our thoughts and actions are conditioned by these records. Our developing *bhakti* (devotion) is also dependent to some extent on our past record and our progress is determined by this law of acceleration modified by limitations in our individual make up.

डा. डिल्ली रमण रेग्मी
कल्याणी रेग्मी स्मा
पुस्तकालय

406

hope to have better sight or ability on the surface of the moon. The fact that the moon-walkers did not see them is fully in accord with what is to be expected and there is nothing to get excited about.

Only immature minds that are not deeply knowledgeable about science or religion will be swayed by these recent achievements of science, which are undoubtedly large steps forward for the limited human mind. The day man is able to put a space vehicle weighing 6×10^{21} tons in an orbit of 584 million miles round the sun at a speed of 18.5 miles per second (or about 66,000 miles per hour) completing one round in three hundred and sixty five and one fourth days, he can think of measuring his achievements against those of *prakrti.* We must in all humility realise that as yet we are studying and controlling only an infinitesimally small fraction of the vast powers of *prakrti* (nature) all around us; we must turn away from *prakrti* towards God, the controller of *prakrti.*

and their being governed by universal laws of science. This is so well known to the scientific mind that these paragraphs might have verged on the platitudinous. They are really the jumping board for applying similar considerations in the spiritual field—in the study of the doctrine of grace and allied topics by examining specific concepts. Great seers of all religions have affirmed from experience that God is so full of mercy and grace, and he is only waiting for man to turn Godward; if you take one step towards Him, He will take ten steps towards you. How will this tie up with an abstract notion of God as *sat-cit-ananda*? We concluded earlier that God could not act with His hands and feet in dealing with this extremely large multiplicity of physical events. Could He be dealing with spiritual events separately as his province? How many millions of *bhaktas* (devotees) must be on earth at various stages of evolution, and how many more in other solar systems and in non-physical states of existence? Could it be that God is using some universal laws here too? In turning Godward we are following the normal process of the evolution of man towards his goal—manifesting the divinity latent and immanent in him. As by turning Godward we are, so to say, swimming with the current, it has been found by seers from experience that the progress gets automatically accelerated—very much like gravity accelerating the speed of subjects falling towards the earth at 32 ft. per sec^2. The approach to the goal was quicker than was thought at the beginning, and the seers dramatically presented the phenomenon by saying God takes ten steps if you take one towards Him. We have already noticed that each of us carries in his mental sheath of *manomaya kosa* the record of all our past doings and that our thoughts and actions are conditioned by these records. Our developing *bhakti* (devotion) is also dependent to some extent on our past record and our progress is determined by this law of acceleration modified by limitations in our individual make up.

hope to have better sight or ability on the surface of the moon. The fact that the moon-walkers did not see them is fully in accord with what is to be expected and there is nothing to get excited about.

Only immature minds that are not deeply knowledgeable about science or religion will be swayed by these recent achievements of science, which are undoubtedly large steps forward for the limited human mind. The day man is able to put a space vehicle weighing 6 x 10^{21} tons in an orbit of 584 million miles round the sun at a speed of 18.5 miles per second (or about 66,000 miles per hour) completing one round in three hundred and sixty five and one fourth days, he can think of measuring his achievements against those of *prakrti*. We must in all humility realise that as yet we are studying and controlling only an infinitesimally small fraction of the vast powers of *prakrti* (nature) all around us; we must turn away from *prakrti* towards God, the controller of *prakrti*.

Mind over Matter

We have so far considered in relation to the abstract concept of *sat-cit-ananda*, the acceleration of the progress of the spiritual aspirant and his moral values and have also considered two minor gods—the sun and the moon. There are other phenomena like special holy places where prayers are answered, manifestations of divinity, etc., which also have to be considered. All religions have their pilgrim centres where people believe that their prayers are answered in a special way different from other places of worship. How do places of worship acquire specially divine qualities? How do images acquire these qualities? Sometimes these temples or churches have a tradition that there was a divine manifestation and that made them holy. This we shall consider along with the appearance of manifestations. There are many others which have acquired reputations for granting boons without having such associations with manifestations. In Hindu temples when an image is installed for worship there is placed below it a metal plate which has been impregnated with holy vibrations by the chanting of *mantras* as prescribed in the ancient *Sastras*. Holy vibrations can also be accumulated over a period of years from the congregation. Every time a fervent prayer is uttered the mind sends out certain holy vibrations. Every time a person brings thoughts of ill will or hatred, opposite vibrations are brought in. In due course, because of the large preponderance of loving, devotional thoughts, holy vibrations accumulate. These in turn help the devotees by making it easy for them to entertain holy thoughts and to concentrate on the Godhead—in particular, the presiding deity of that place. This is the justification for worship in temples and churches being enjoined by the various religions for congregational prayers. Thus, congregational prayers make a place holy and build up its sanctity.

The connection of these holy places and the granting of boons or prayers remains to be elucidated. Very often the prayers of devotees are answered. But often enough they are not answered. There are two factors in the fulfilment of prayers—(a) our *samskaras* which are due for fruition in this birth lead us to wish

The science that teaches man the way to develop these mental powers is yoga. In Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra*, Part III, called *Vibhutipada*, deals with these supernormal powers and how to acquire them. The prerequisite for entry into a course of practice in yoga is a pure life—observing *yamas* (dont's) and the *niyamas* (the do's). Thereafter, by various physical, breathing and mental exercises, concentration has to be developed, The three stages with which *Vibhutipada* starts are *dharana*—binding the mind to a place, *dhyana*—focusing an idea on that place and contemplating on it, and *samadhi*—concentration to such an extent that the contemplator becomes identified with the object of contemplation and duality is removed. A combination of these three in one operation is called *samayama* or constraint which is the key to all supernormal yogic powers. By subjecting various objects to this process of *samayama* various miracles can be performed. These are classified under eight groups as *astamaha siddhis*. They are miracles or wonders in the sense that the average man does not understand how these powers are acquired or how they operate. But to practising yogis, their's is as much a science as any of the physical sciences—they have to be studied by following certain disciplines and methods and the results are as certain as in physical science. The difference between the two studies is that one studies physical laws and deals with physical phenomena; the other studies mental powers and deals with non-material and material objects. The development of mental powers requires a high degree of purification of the mind, which in turn requires severe discipline in our daily life. Because of the exacting requirements in the pre-admission stage, the numbers who study this science are necessarily limited in all ages—but because of the emphasis on material comforts and material pleasures in our age, the number of yogic practitioners is fewer than normal.

The above brief description of the technique of miracles will be insufficient for the enquiring mind of today. Only a practising yogi can give a complete explanation, but they are not prepared to publicise their secrets for fear of abuse. However, to the extent that books allow us to glean something, an attempt is being made to explain the position by an elucidation of the relations between mind and matter—especially how matter, name and form can emerge from mind. In considering the relation between mind and matter, we must revert to our Third Law which stated that both

Mind over Matter

We have so far considered in relation to the abstract concept of *sat-cit-ananda*, the acceleration of the progress of the spiritual aspirant and his moral values and have also considered two minor gods—the sun and the moon. There are other phenomena like special holy places where prayers are answered, manifestations of divinity, etc., which also have to be considered. All religions have their pilgrim centres where people believe that their prayers are answered in a special way different from other places of worship. How do places of worship acquire specially divine qualities? How do images acquire these qualities? Sometimes these temples or churches have a tradition that there was a divine manifestation and that made them holy. This we shall consider along with the appearance of manifestations. There are many others which have acquired reputations for granting boons without having such associations with manifestations. In Hindu temples when an image is installed for worship there is placed below it a metal plate which has been impregnated with holy vibrations by the chanting of *mantras* as prescribed in the ancient *Sastras*. Holy vibrations can also be accumulated over a period of years from the congregation. Every time a fervent prayer is uttered the mind sends out certain holy vibrations. Every time a person brings thoughts of ill will or hatred, opposite vibrations are brought in. In due course, because of the large preponderance of loving, devotional thoughts, holy vibrations accumulate. These in turn help the devotees by making it easy for them to entertain holy thoughts and to concentrate on the Godhead—in particular, the presiding deity of that place. This is the justification for worship in temples and churches being enjoined by the various religions for congregational prayers. Thus, congregational prayers make a place holy and build up its sanctity.

The connection of these holy places and the granting of boons or prayers remains to be elucidated. Very often the prayers of devotees are answered. But often enough they are not answered. There are two factors in the fulfilment of prayers—(a) our *samskaras* which are due for fruition in this birth lead us to wish

The science that teaches man the way to develop these mental powers is yoga. In Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra*, Part III, called *Vibhutipada*, deals with these supernormal powers and how to acquire them. The prerequisite for entry into a course of practice in yoga is a pure life—observing *yamas* (dont's) and the *niyamas* (the do's). Thereafter, by various physical, breathing and mental exercises, concentration has to be developed, The three stages with which *Vibhutipada* starts are *dharana*—binding the mind to a place, *dhyana*—focusing an idea on that place and contemplating on it, and *samadhi*—concentration to such an extent that the contemplator becomes identified with the object of contemplation and duality is removed. A combination of these three in one operation is called *samayama* or constraint which is the key to all supernormal yogic powers. By subjecting various objects to this process of *samayama* various miracles can be performed. These are classified under eight groups as *astamaha siddhis*. They are miracles or wonders in the sense that the average man does not understand how these powers are acquired or how they operate. But to practising yogis, their's is as much a science as any of the physical sciences—they have to be studied by following certain disciplines and methods and the results are as certain as in physical science. The difference between the two studies is that one studies physical laws and deals with physical phenomena; the other studies mental powers and deals with non-material and material objects. The development of mental powers requires a high degree of purification of the mind, which in turn requires severe discipline in our daily life. Because of the exacting requirements in the pre-admission stage, the numbers who study this science are necessarily limited in all ages—but because of the emphasis on material comforts and material pleasures in our age, the number of yogic practitioners is fewer than normal.

The above brief description of the technique of miracles will be insufficient for the enquiring mind of today. Only a practising yogi can give a complete explanation, but they are not prepared to publicise their secrets for fear of abuse. However, to the extent that books allow us to glean something, an attempt is being made to explain the position by an elucidation of the relations between mind and matter—especially how matter, name and form can emerge from mind. In considering the relation between mind and matter, we must revert to our Third Law which stated that both cosmic energy and cosmic matter emerged from and operate under the control of *hiranyagarbha* or cosmic consciousness. Everything in the physical universe obeys the will of *hiranyagarbha*: Fire burns and water flows because *hiranyagarbha* has so willed. It is because of the order and regularity imposed by *hiranyagarbha* that the development of science is possible. By observation scientific laws have been formed describing how things behave under certain conditions. Our mind, which is a part of cosmic mind, is in constant contact with it. If we can develop the power of our mind to such an extent that we can tap the power of *hiranyagarbha* or operate through it, then we can easily bypass the laws of physics and chemistry, biology and geology, mathematics and astronomy, and perform miracles: that is, we can ensure certain changes in isolated instances which do not conform to the laws of science. The nature of fire is to continue to burn wood or clothes. If a fire which has started burning the sari of a lady stops suddenly, or a jungle fire raging along in one direction stops suddenly and turns back, then we admit that a miracle has occured. As stated earlier, it is not difficult for anyone to satisfy himself about the reality of miracles.

Alternatively, working backwards from the reality of miracles we can also derive our Third Law. Ordinarily, the nature of fire is to burn clothes that come in contact with it. If in one instance a fire which has started burning a sari suddenly stops burning, then we can reasonably infer that that power which stopped the burning has control over fire at all times. It interferes in isolated instances and creates exceptions. Therefore, fire burns under normal conditions only in accordance with the will of that power. This is the real meaning of the Latin dictum '*exception probat rulam*'—the exception proves the rule, i.e., the power to make an exception implies the power of general control. The technique explained by Patanjali is a mental technique. Bhagavan Sai Baba and others who perform miracles also assert that their will is fulfilled. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that mental power which can make exceptions in isolated cases is in general control over matter which it alters as it wants, i.e., the principle that mind controls matter.

Miracles are concerned not only with altering the nature of some articles or the course of some force, but also with creating new articles from nothing and nowhere', e.g., a ring or a wrist watch. There are two kinds of problems—first, how matter emerges from nowhere and, second, how it is shaped and fitted to become a useful article like a ring or a wrist watch. These are the problems we referred to as the emergence of matter, name and form in the preceding paragraphs. With regard to the first problem of the emergence of matter from mind, we have to go back to our Third Law which shows that cosmic matter emerged from cosmic consciousness or cosmic mind. From it, by differentiation or individuation, were evolved the five grand principles of space, air, fire, water, and earth. The entire phenomenal world is a permutation and combination of these five. Any kind of matter, steel or gold or anything else, can be easily produced from mind, which is the source of all matter.

The next part relates to the shape or form these materials should take and to an effective and efficient combination of these parts which together form the object required—in this case a wrist watch. By the exercise of *samyama*, referred to by Patanjali, the yogi is able to make the material take the form which he formulates in his mind. We should not think that all these processes take a long time. The mind works fast and produces whatever is willed almost instantaneously. Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba says that the moment He wills that something should occur, it is ready that very instant. He also says that mind is matter which becomes objects that He wills to create: 'Mind is matter. Only it is very subtle, we cannot point out its length, breadth, thickness or weight. It can be objectified. Sankalpa can do it.'[2] This process is apparently analogous to creation and Baba says that 'the miracle was the *nidarshan* (evidence) of God having created the world out of His will. Science, which cannot comprehend this, scoffs at the idea of the physical universe arising from God's will as taught in the Bible.'[3]

One final question remains—can we not by these miraculous powers abolish poverty, illness and natural calamities like typhoons, etc.? In the first place these are not an unwanted surplus to be removed at our sweet will. They are really an integral and necessary part of the universe—the reality before us. It is only our thinking that labels them as bad (p. 9 above). Secondly, all events occur according to the law of cause and effect, the law of

[2] Kasturi, K.N., *Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*, Part III, p. 295.

[3] Ibid., p. 295.

karma ordained by the Absolute for the functioning of the universe. Miracles cannot operate against the laws of *karma*. They may be mitigated or the target may be changed, but the forces of *karma* must operate and spend themselves out. Baba cures illnesses by the exercise of miraculous powers, but He does not take up all cases. Some He does not cure and allows the disease to take its course, as He does not wish to interfere with *karma*. Where the *karmic* forces are strong and He decides to help the devotee, He takes over the disease himself. Thus, *karmic* force is not nullified, but diverted to a different target. A well published instance of this is the appendicitis drama that occurred in December 1970 in the official residence of the Lieutenant Governor of Goa.[4] Baba took over an inflamed appendix from a devotee and went through the suffering, and eventually shook it off without any medicine or surgery. Baba explained that the devotee could not have survived the suffering, and his continued existence in good health is necessary for the work for which Baba has come, viz., the establishment of *dharma* or righteousness. The power that operates through Baba is the power that set the *karmic* laws in motion and will not at any time seek to nullify those laws. Ordinary yogis have less power and they cannot act against the laws of *karma*. Despite their spectacular nature, miracles are a limited power and do not operate against the laws of *karma*. However, within their limitations they show that mind has superiority over matter. In the case of Bhagavan Baba they are also evidence of His divine nature, which is really manifested by his absolutely selfless love and the total absence of egoism. His powers are also greater than those of ordinary yogis. Yogis who are absorbed in miracles very soon lose this power, and have to start again from scratch in building up their spiritual powers. That is why all seekers are warned not to waste their time and energy with these trifling toys which the world acclaims as superhuman miracles, but to proceed in the spiritual path where really worthwhile treasures await the seeker.

---

[4] Ibid., p. 259 *et seq.*

Worship and Manifestations

We shall briefly consider how social values, etc., form part of the group mind or the community mind which influences us. Psychologists have debated for a long time whether there is a group mind distinct from the minds of the individuals composing the group. Most psychologists have veered towards the position that there is no separate group mind and any phenomena necessitating the postulation of a group mind to explain them can be equally well explained as the result of the interaction of the minds of individuals meeting as a group. There is the cosmic mind all around us and it carries the impress of what the people around us are thinking. The mind of the individual and the cosmic mind with these impressions act and react on each other. The more developed the mind of the individual, the less are the chances of his being swayed by the thought waves around. On the contrary his thought waves will get impressed on the cosmic mind and may form a force for the good of others. That is why we are told that the company we keep influences us and that we can benefit if we sit quietly in the presence of an enlightened person even if he does not communicate anything in words. The same consideration applies to temples, churches, and other places of worship. Part of the spiritual struggle of the individual is to ensure that he is not affected by lower vibrations around him and to be independent of social values which are not favourable to spiritual development. Thus, in spiritual development one has to watch and guard oneself against not only the downward pulls of inner tendencies caused by *samskaras* acquired in previous births, but also against outer tendencies generated by the society or company around one. Only when practice has strengthened the individual's capacity to concentrate and meditate can he take the risk of exposing himself to any company or any type of food. Though we cannot often choose our food or the company we keep, we can minimise the impact from these by developing an attitude of detachment—eradicating desires for those objects which have downward pulls. The development of mental powers of concentration is important both for *yoga marga* (yoga way) and the *bhakti marga* (devotional way) towards the omnipresent God.

The devotion of the *bhakta* (devotee) does not merely confer boons affecting his material life, but can compel the formless *sat-cit-ananda* to manifest itself. This supreme divine power is present everywhere, very much like gravity, as the invisible supporter and controller of the manifested universe. The various shrines are like substations connected to a vast power grid and we can tap the divine power from any substation. The nature and extent of use of the power depends on the individual—his preparedness and state of development. Where the devotee prays earnestly to the Supreme in a particular form and yearns for a direct vision, God manifests Himself in that form. This does not mean that this is the only form of God or that it is superior to other forms. Religious factionalism and feud over the superiority or veracity of individual forms is meaningless and without any foundation. Disciples following the path of a great master who received the Vision, can themselves have the same Vision if their devotion is sufficiently developed and strengthened. This does not mean that in the interval God remained in the same form or that during periods of manifestation the divine power ceases to operate elsewhere in the universe. In one substation the divine power has activated a form and operates in a visible way through that form. Everywhere else it continues to operate in the unmanifested form as usual. This is all that the manifestation means.

In addition to such transient manifestations for brief periods, we also have *avataras* or manifestations lasting several years when God walks the earth in human form. An objection often raised against *avataras* as manifestations of God is that the omnipresent God cannot be confined to the narrow confines of a human body. As we saw just now there is no exclusiveness in manifestation and the power of *sat-cit-ananda* continues to operate as before in all other places. The *avatara* is only a convenient focus for the operation of the divine power in a visible and tangible way. There have been several *avataras* in the past—Krisna, Christ, Mohammed and Buddha are a few that come readily to mind. In our times we have divinity living and moving with us in human form as Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba. From birth He has been performing several miracles as evidence of His divine powers. These are different from the yoga *siddhis* already explained. While *siddhis* are also part of the operation of *prakrti* or *maya*, the *avatara* taps power from the source that is beyond *prakrti* or *maya*—the ultimate *sat-cit-ananda*. The *avatara* is a part of the omnipotent that creates, protects, and destroys the universe, and its operations cover a wider field than *siddhis*.

When we say God or divinity is walking the earth in human form what exactly do we mean? We have seen that the Absolute or divinity is a vast power which envelops, permeates and controls the universe. If we imagine that Absolute as a vast powergrid then Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba is a substation from which that power flows and operates in a visible form. The physical body of Bhagavan Baba is only an instrument through which divine power operates. The real Sai Baba is this power and this is the one to which He refers when He uses the word I. Baba himself made a distinction between His body and this power on Christmas day in 1970: 'My Body like all other bodies is a temporary habitation; but My Power is eternal, all pervasive and ever dominant.'[1] This is why He says that worship offered to any God in any form and name reaches Him and He grants grace. The relationship between the general divine power and this 'substation' needs elucidation. In the first place, there is no exclusiveness—there were, are and will continue to be, several other substations through which this vast power of the Absolute operates. Lourdes, for instance, continues to be a place where miraculous cures occur, even after Bhagavan Sai Baba started His miraculous cures. The difference is that in Lourdes there is no visible source, no tangible output through which the power operates. On the other hand, Sai Baba is a visible, moving, talking 'substation'. We can question, discuss, clear our doubts and understand from this 'substation' and this is a very material and important difference. Every one of us is, according to Hindu philosophy, a focal point of this absolute consciousness. It may be asked what is the difference between us and Sai Baba? In Him the power flows out unhindered and with full force and power. In us that power is almost completely muffled by our mental *samskaras* and tendencies. It is not completely snuffed out—it cannot be—and it operates as a weak, though persistent, voice of conscience. When Bhagavan Sai Baba says 'the fact is worship of the Lord in any form, in any name, is the worship of Sai' or that it is He who grants all boons irrespective of the God to whom you make your supplication, what is meant is that the power that operates in and through the Sai form is identical with the power to which you pray. In these instances the use of the word 'I' refers not to the physical body, but to the absolute power which is functioning through the body, He says: 'I very often tell you not to identify even Me with this particular physical build-up. But you do not understand. You call Me by One Name only and believe I have one Form only. Remember there is No Name I do not bear, there is no Form that is not Mine.' Details regarding his life and teachings have been covered in another book by the present author.

---

[1] Kasturi, K. N., *Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*, Vol, III, p. 136.

Personal God

Having thus considered the manifestation and operation of *sat-cit-ananda*, we shall see how far it can be described as personal or impersonal. It is not personal in the sense that it has human form with hands and feet, etc. The concept of personality belongs to the realm of philosophy. Its essentials are a consciousness of itself, the past, present and future, and, based on this consciousness, an ability to engage in purposeful activity which co-ordinates this knowledge with the objectives aimed at. These are absent in animals, and man's claim to personality is based on these qualities which distinguish him from others. *Sat-cit-ananda* has a consciousness of not only itself but also the past, present and future in a measure which no man can aspire to. It is also engaged in purposeful activity to liberate all souls in the universe—the whole drama of creation, preservation and destruction is designed with this supreme objective. The Hindu theory of evolution is based on this assumption as we saw at the beginning of this book. In this philosophic sense the ultimate is a personal God—but 'a person' of a unique and peculiar character, far different from human persons. That is why God is distinguished as *uttama* (excellent) *purusa* (person).

Release

Looking back we notice that we embarked on this analysis and study of the ultimate as a preliminary to understanding what we mean by merging in God or manifesting the divinity immanent and latent in us. The individual soul is a spark of the eternal omnipresent and omniscient flame of God. After separation from God it is covered by *avidya* or ignorance and it takes various births through the instrumentality of *moola prakrti* or *maya.* The purpose of the experience gathered in these births is the removal of this veil of *avidya* or ignorance and getting fixed in the distinction between self or soul and the body-mind complex, and then the *jivatma* (individual soul) becomes as pure as *paramatma* (supreme soul) and ceases to have a separate existence, i.e., it forms one with the ultimate God or merges in Him. This process of knowing or realising God is different from any other kind of knowledge acquired by us. Ordinarily the process of knowing affects only the intellect—it is an apprehension only of the mind. In *Brahma jnana* (or knowledge of *Brahman* the Absolute), it is a total apprehension of *Brahman* by the totality of the knower. That is why the *Vedas* state *Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavati*—the knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman* itself. This idea is also expressed by the statement that all distinctions between the knower, the object of knowledge, and the process of knowing ceases to exist at the dawn of *Brahma jnana*. In other words, the *jivatma* has merged in the *paramatma*. The manifestation of the divinity that is latent in us and the merger with the divine are merely two ways of describing the same process. Now let us formulate our last law thus:

Fourteenth Law : The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. Knowledge of Brahman is not an intellectual process, but a total apprehension by the entirety of the soul or Atma, i.e., this is a real merger of the soul or Atma in Brahman; in this process the distinction between knower (soul), the known (Brahman), and knowledge, gets obliterated as the knower has ceased to be separate from Brahman.

Unattached *karma* (dedicated action) and *bhakti* (devotion) have been discussed as means of liberation. Meditation known as *dhyana* remains to be considered as an instrument of release. *Dhyana* (meditation) is the constant practice of concentrating the mind on the supreme Godhead and thinking about it to the exclusion of everything else. This practice is very useful in calming the mind and getting control over it. One of the aids to *dhyana* is regulated breathing. We know from our personal experience that when we are excited or agitated our pulse starts beating fast and breathing is also very heavy and fast. From this our ancient seers realised the connection between breathing and the condition of the mind. They reversed the roles and tested and found from experience that slow regular breathing can calm the mind and restrict its tendency to roam and flit from subject to subject. Thus regulated breathing was used and has been recommended to all aspirants as a means of controlling the mind. Other aids are regulated food and yoga exercises called *asanas* (poses) and above all the observation of morals laid down by the *niyamas* (the do's) and *yamas* (dont's).

The ability to concentrate depends to a large extent on our previous *samskaras* and *vasanas* (tendencies) and our present likes and dislikes. While there are differences in degree in the ability to concentrate, there are very few who cannot concentrate at all. The main issue is our interest in and liking for the subject on which concentration is to be focused. While one concentrates on novels another concentrates on cinema or music. Acquisition of new knowledge or skills and full enjoyment of life will not be possible without concentration. In religious meditation each *sadhaka* (aspirant) is asked to select the form that appeals to him most for his meditation. It is also important to observe what the mind does, so that it may be brought back to the object of meditation. This is a very useful practice and at the beginning most aspirants find the mind behaving like a playful wayward child—rather difficult to control and hold down to an object for any length of time. But determined constant practice will succeed sooner or later. Such introspective analysis will also help us to check the mind in its activities in day to day life. Many of its inclinations are often covered by the mind with a cloak of duty to escape the censorship of our conscience. With a little practice we should be able to call this bluff of our mind and help our conscience to make a sound judgement. What is needed is cold and deliberate self analysis and introspective search.

What precisely do we do in meditation? Here is Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba's advice as given in his book *Dhyana Vahini* :

> One should sit adopting the Padmasana pose. The fingers of the hand must be in close touch with each other and the hand should be placed in front. The eyes must be either half open or fully closed. Then by means of mental massage the neck, the shoulders, the hands, the chest, the teeth, the stomach, the fingers, the back, the thighs, the knees, the calves and the feet should be relaxed. After this one has to meditate on one's favourite Name and Form with OM added. When this is done there should be no mental wanderings, one must be stable and quiet.[1]

The wayward mind wanders hither and thither, but it is possible to fasten it on one fixed point, by means of steady discipline and training in Sadhana. This is the condition called *Ekagratha* one pointedness. It is also referred to as single mindedness or Dharana. The uninterrupted flow of oil from one vessel to another is a fine symbol of the mental process called Dharana.

> When, for example, you meditate on a table, your thoughts dwell on the wood, the size and measurements, the style, the mode of manufacture, etc. No other thought pertaining to anything else should be allowed. If the thought hovers around a cot, the idea of the table becomes hazy and the cot too is imagined incompletely. Both get confused. The state of mind must be single pointed. So, too, when the Lord's form is meditated upon, let the mind dwell upon the form of each part and the beauty and splendour and these ideas must be co-ordinated and combined into the complete picture.[2]

Progress in meditation will help in the development of *samadhi*—that stage of deep meditation where the distinction between the *sadhaka* and the object of meditation get obliterated. In this stage of evolution, all that should be known will be poured on the *sadhaka* like rain (*dharmamegha*). Even in the normal stage of physical activity he will realise his identity with the *paramatma* (supreme soul) and know that he and the entire universe are a projection of the same *sat-cit-ananda*. Seeing one in all and all in one the individual finds that the powerful flame of *jnana* or flawless knowledge has not only removed the veil of *avidya* but has also consumed all the accumulated information and impressions in his mind including all *karmic* forces. Thus he is not born any more and his separate identity ceases, by merges in the universal *paramatma*. This is the consummation desired by all theistic religions. Even Buddhism sees a similar end in that the individual self ceases to be or is blown out. It does not accept the next step of a merger in a supreme super soul as it does not posit an ultimate reality called God.

---

[1] Bhagvan Satya Sai Baba, *Dhyana Vahini*, p. 7.

[2] Ibid., p. 70.

In sum, Hinduism sees this drama of evolution as a deliberately planned process to confer liberation on the individual soul or for the manifestation of the divinity latent in man. This is the supreme *leela* (sport) of that omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent *sat-cit-ananda* which guides and controls this entire universe through *hiranyagarbha*. In this drama each one of us must endeavour to play his part to the best of his ability and dedicate the fruits of his actions to the almighty God. One need not run away from the world, but be in it without being overcome by it—like the leaf of the lotus which can grow only in water, and yet it always keeps floating and does not get wet. 'Fix your mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice to Me; prostrate before Me; so shall you come to Me. This is my pledge to you for you are dear to Me. Renounce all *Dharmas* (duties) and take refuge in Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sins; grieve not.' That is the message of the Bhagavad Gita which can be practised in all climes at all times.

A Statement of the Metaphysical laws formulated in this Book

First Law: The manifested universe exists in a vast field of consciousness called Hiranyagarbha (literally golden egg). Everything big or small, animate or inanimate, existing in this field of cosmic consciousness is a focal point covered by a vehicle or Upadhi.

Second Law: Every Upadhi contains mind, life-energy, and matter in varying proportions; the manifestation of mind and life-energy in the Upadhi varies with the percentage of these components in the Upadhi. All three components are basically the same—mind is a finer form of matter; and matter is a grosser form of mind.

Third Law: Prana or cosmic energy and Rayi or cosmic matter evolved from Hiranyagarbha and operate under its control. Later, by a process of differentiation or individuation, the five grand principles were evolved.

Fourth Law: Everything in creation serves a purpose which determines the nature and composition of the Upadhi or vehicle by which the thing is manifested. Form and function are also determined by that purpose, and the name is a convenient identification tag. To put it in another way, everything in creation has a name, form and function, all of which go together.

Fifth Law: Creation and destruction are changes in name, form and function in the vast space-time-causation matrix, forming part of an evolution, a purpose. All changes in the phenomenal world are an orderly progress from cause to effect. The effect is already implied in the cause and awaits appropriate circumstances for its fruition and manifestation.

Sixth Law: Beyond and behind Hiranyagarbha or cosmic consciousness is the absolute Brahman providing it with power and direction. But Absolute Brahman is inactive and static, though it controls all activities of Hiranyagarbha.

Seventh Law: The focal point in everything in our First Law is the individual soul or Atma or Purusha. This is a spark of the supreme Brahman and has a very strong urge to return to and merge in Brahman from which it emerged. This urge is the driving force of evolution from inert matter to man and beyond to merge in Brahman.

Eighth Law: There are two sets of causes for objects and events in this universe: (a) The seen physical causes, and (b) the unseen mental causes which lead human beings to act in particular ways. These mental causes are to be found in some earlier acts of the individual (often in some previous existence) which condition his mind in a particular way.

Ninth Law: Every thought, word, and deed leaves on our mind some scar called Samskara. These Samskaras are carried in the mind indefinitely from birth to birth till conditions in the space-time-causation matrix become favourable for their fruition into action, and they thus get spent out. This is called the law of Karma.

Tenth Law: What happens to us is largely determined by the laws of Karma; but how we react to these events is within our choice and our acts accumulate new Karma which will bear fruit hereafter.

Eleventh Law: Our will to act arises from, and is controlled by, our mind which consists of (a) facts gained by education and experience mainly in this birth, (b) our Vasanas or tendencies shaped by our previous Karma, and (c) moral forces deriving from the urge of the soul to return to and merge in Absolute Brahman. The final course of action resulting from the interplay of these three divergent forces is within our choice, and this fixes moral responsibility on us. Our present thoughts, words, and deeds constitute new Karma and shape our future.

Twelfth Law: Everything, animate or inanimate, has to follow in this world a course of action and conduct called Dharma derived from the purpose which the thing has to serve, as stated in our Fourth Law. This course of conduct will produce maximum benefit both for the thing concerned and for the rest of the universe. In most cases compliance with Dharma is routine and the word Dharma has a secondary meaning, 'external characteristics'. As man has been given freedom of action, as explained in our Eleventh Law, in human conduct Dharma has become a moral standard to be achieved. Dharma derived from purposiveness or Arthavatva is not only divinely ordained, but a part of divinity itself.

Thirteenth Law: Our Samskaras are shaped by our motives and desires for results, rather than by the acts themselves. When acts are done from a sense of duty, the desires for worldly experiences are reduced and thus also the need for future births to undergo those experiences.

Fourteenth Law: The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

Knowledge of Brahman is not an intellectual process, but a total apprehension by the entirety of the soul or Atma, i.e., this is a real merger of the soul or Atma in Brahman; in this process the distinction between knower (soul), the known (Brahman), and knowledge, gets obliterated as the knower has ceased to be separate from Brahman.

Glossary of Sanskrit Terms used

1. *Ananda*	Divine bliss. One of the characteristics of the supreme God, and the name of one of the *kosas* or sheaths in the human body—the one closest to the soul and impelling it towards liberation.
2. *Avatara*	Literally means coming down, i.e.. God coming down in human form. The Bhagavad Gita says that from age to age whenever justice is repressed and injustice assumes a controlling position God in human form descends to punish the wicked and uphold the moral code. There have been several such manifestations in India and elsewhere.
3. *Avyakta*	This is the opposite of *vyakta* which means individualised. *Avyakta* refers to matter *en masse* before it was separated into different items with a name and form for each. It is often translated as 'undifferentiated' as in this booklet; but it is also translated as 'unmanifested'.
4. *Bhakti*	Devotion which an individual has towards God or his teacher (*guru*). When *bhakti* of an individual is acknowledged by God or the teacher, grace begins to flow towards the devotee (*bhakta*).
5. *Brahman*	This is the highest principle of Godhead recognised in Hinduism. After negating all other qualities, the seers give only three positive characteristics to it—*sat*: existence, *cit*: consciousness and *ananda*: bliss. All these are absolute and unqualified in this supreme Godhead.
6. *Brahma*	This is different from the supreme Godhead referred to above. This is the creator in the

	Hindu Trinity:* They are agents of the supreme *Brahman*.
7. *Cit*	Consciousness or awareness. This term is also translated as knowledge. Absolute consciousness or knowledge of everything past, present and future is a quality of the supreme *Brahman* (q.v.) only. This is the aspect of the supreme power that helps our mind to know various things in the phenomenal world.
8. *Citta*	Mind stuff or the substance of which the cosmic mind or cosmic intelligence (*Hiranyagarbha* [q.v.]) and our minds are made. It is an intermediate stage between energy and matter as explained in the text.
9. *Dharma*	Derived from the root *dhr* 'to bear or support', 'to wear'. In reference to human conduct it refers to the collection of duties attached to a person by virtue of his position in life and in society and in the family. It includes both positive do's and negative don'ts. The Bhagavad Gita says that one's own *dharma* performed even imperfectly is better than performing well another's *dharma*. Although superficially there appear to be two distinct meanings describing (a) the external characteristics of objects and (b) the moral standard for human beings, they are one and the same if we appreciate *dharma* as a grand law of the universe. It lays down for everything in the universe living and non-living, and what is expected of each of them. It is as natural for man to do what is good for society and for himself, as it is for fire to burn or water to flow. When man is given a choice in his conduct, selfishness leads him away from the law, and it becomes a moral standard to be reached by him. For the rest of the universe without

---

* Brahma is the creator, Visnu the preserver, and Rudra the destroyer.

	choice, natural law and moral law coincide. Breach of *dharma* by anyone will result in consequences which affect the breaker adversely and suffering will result.
10. *Guna*	Usually translated as aspects or characteristics for want of a better term. There are three of these: (a) *satya*—the principle representing brightness, intelligence, balance, calmness, etc., (b) *rajas*—the principle representing activity, ambition, desire, etc., and (c) *tamas*—the principle representing dullness, inactivity, deceit, etc. They are not qualities attached to any substance. They are the real stuff, the warp and woof of primordial nature (*moola prakrti* [q.v.]). All three constituents are present in every animate and inanimate object in the universe—the difference being in the predominance of one or another over the other two. These can never be destroyed, but can be resolved back again into primordial nature.
11. *Guru*	The teacher who guides an aspirant (*sadhaka* [q.v.]) towards the goal of liberation or the manifestation of the divinity in man. From the nature of the task it is clear that the *guru* must have reached the goal; otherwise it would be a case of blind leading the blind. When a human *guru* is not available, God will appear as a *guru* to the eager aspirant. The disciple is asked to treat the *guru* with the same reverence as shown to God and to have absolute faith in him. Doubts and questions should precede the selection of a *guru* and should not come thereafter.
12. *Hiranyagarbha*	Literally means golden egg or golden womb. This is the cosmic soul or cosmic intelligence immanent in the world. Individual souls and minds are fragments of this universal soul or mind. According to Hindu philosophy this was the first product of evolution from

	primordial nature (*moola prakrti* [q.v.]) in the *avyakta* (q.v.) state and everything else evolved from *hiranyagarbha*.
13. *Karma*	Literally means action. We often speak of the laws of *karma*. By this is meant that anything that we do (or even think) is bound to have some result hereafter—either in this birth or in another. If we do good, we reap good. If we do evil, we reap evil. Looked at from another angle all that happens to us now is the result of something we did in the past—either in this birth or in some other previous existence. It is really a part of the grand law of *dharma* (q.v.) and is a philosophy of hope and challenge, i.e., the future is entirely in your hands to be shaped for good or for ill, by your conduct here and now. In the absence of spatial or temporal proximity between cause and effect, the limited human mind is unable to see the connection between them. However, the ancient seers with their superhuman vision were able to see this connection and propounded this law of *karma* as the only valid and rational explanation for all 'native' differences between individuals belonging to the same species. The law of *karma* does not negate the physical laws of heredity, environmental effects, etc. On the other hand, it operates through these laws; in other words, these are the conditions that favour the phenomenalisation of the effects of our past deeds and thoughts. The law of *karma* may be summed up thus: 'Nothing happens by itself or by chance. Every event in this universe has both a cause and an effect.' A slightly different formulation of the same truth which includes physical conditions that favour the phenomenalisation of the fruits of our previous deeds would be thus: 'All events

	occur in a space–time–causation matrix which unfolds them in a causal chain sequence.'
14. *Karma Yoga*	This philosophy of action says: discharge your *dharma* (q.v.) without desire for the fruits. Surrender the fruits of your action to God. Then these acts will not attach themselves to you in the operation of the laws of *karma* as explained above. When the individual proceeds in this way he may realise that he is not an agent, but an instrument in the scheme divinely ordained. Further, spiritual progress can lead to the dawn of realisation of the unity of the universe—that the doer, the deed, and the thing done are all three aspects of the same reality and thus lead towards final liberation or *mukti.*
15. *Kosa*	Literally means sheath. The human body consists of five sheaths. The physical sheath (*annamaya kosa*), the life sheath (*pranamaya kosa*), the mind sheath (*manomaya kosa*), the intellect sheath (*vijnanamaya kosa*) and the bliss sheath (*anandamaya kosa*). These are not separate layers but one inside the other. Taittiriya Upanishad says that they pervade each other very much like heat permeating a red hot iron ball.
16. *Mahabhuta*	Literally great beings or great objects. This term has been translated as grand basic principles in this book. They are five in number—space, air, fire, water, and earth. These are not elements as understood in chemistry. They are bricks in the structure of the universe. They evolved from *hiranyagarbha* (q.v.) and the whole universe is a permutation and combination of these.
17. *Maya*	This is a complex idea representing so many aspects. In brief it is the power which enables the creation of this universe. It is also translated as 'illusion' in which sense it gives

	the impression that it refers to something imaginary. *Maya* is not real because it is not permanent: it is transient. It veils our covers the reality of *Brahman* (q.v.) from our view and it is referred to as something that hides the reality. Sankara says that everything from *hiranyagarbha* (q.v.) downwards is *maya* or a product of *maya*. *Moola prakrti* (q.v.) is another name for *maya*.
18. *Moola prakrti*	Primordial nature or cosmic power which has only three *gunas*, (q.v.) *satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, as its constituents. It is the source from which the entire universe sprang in the process of evolution and in the end to which the universe returns on dissolution at the completion of involution. It is also the source of all energies in the universe. It is undifferentiated (*avyakta*) and hence the prefix *moola* original) is attached to the term *prakrti*.
19. *Mukti*	Literally liberation, i.e., freeing oneself from the cycle of births and deaths. It is also described as merging in the eternal or manifesting divinity in man. Though normally achieved on death, a highly advanced person can achieve liberation while living in this physical frame. Such a person is called a *jivanmukta*—living liberated person.
20. *Parinama*	Evolution, changes that take place with the lapse of time. Except *Brahman* everything else changes. These changes are studied for convenience of analysis under three aspects—but these do not represent three different changes—*dharma parinama*: changes in external characteristics; *avastha parinama*: changes in intensity; and *laksana parinama*: time variations. Any item of change may include all three or any one or two of these.
. *Prakrti*	The entire manifested universe as we see it and all physical forces present in it are

	collectively covered by the term *prakrti*. This term is often translated as nature. Without *purusa* (q.v.) *prakrti* cannot act, it is inactive or as good as dead.
22. *Purusa*	Literally that which fills. As the supreme God is omnipresent, filling everything, He is called *purusa*. In more precise terms, *purusa* is the power or consciousness that activates *prakrti*. The individual soul is also called *purusa* as it is only a spark of the supreme Godhead and it performs the same functions with regard to the individual body. When it is necessary to avoid confusion and refer to God exclusively, the term *Uttama purusa* or excellent soul is used.
23. *Sadhaka*	One who performs religious practice or an aspirant towards *mukti* or liberation. There are various paths—*bhakti* (q.v.), *yoga* (q.v.), *karma yoga* (q.v.), etc. But in the last stages the help of a *guru* (q.v) is essential.
24. *Samskara*	Every *citta vritti* (thought wave) produces a *samskara* (subliminal impression) which is retained in the *citta* (mind stuff) as one of its *dharma* (eternal characteristics) and serves as a source of recall. Thought waves themselves have their origin in *samskaras*. In this way the wheel of *samskaras* and *citta vrittis* rolls on. These *samskaras* can be carried forward from birth to birth. They remain as subliminal impressions in the *citta* and influence thinking in the following ways : (a) They can generate discrete thought waves corresponding to the original impression and (b) they can produce *vasanas* (tendencies) which generate desires and where particular desires are strong, they lead to action. Their function (a) is relevant to meditation while (b) is linked with the laws of *karma*. In the latter, the desires generated are those which have a favourable background in the set up in

	which the individual lives and are connected with the *karmas* which are due for fruition in the present life.
25. *Sat*	Existence. One of the characteristics of the supreme Godhead is its absolute existence, i.e., it exists forever without any change. In this way it is different from *prakrti* or anything pertaining to *prakrti* which is subject to change.
26. *Sattva*	One of the *gunas* constituting *moola prakrti*, The mind also consists of these three *gunas* and the predominance of one or other over the other two determines the state of the mind. Predominance of *sattva* over the other two is the natural state of the mind. One of the purposes of the mind is discrimination between self and *sattva*. In this context the term *sattva* is used, perhaps, widely as equivalent to a body-mind complex. As a component of *prakrti* this *sattva* is the principle standing for vividness, clarity, etc., as a component of *prakrti* and the mind. The problem is that in the process of knowing, *sattva* and self play complementary roles which are akin to each other. While *sattva* stands for clarity and vividness, self or *purusa* provides illumination for the dawn of knowledge. There is a possibility of confusion between these two and their functions—clarity (*sattva*) provided by the mind and illumination (*citti-sakti*) provided by *purusa* or self. The mind itself is required to make this distinction between the two by keen introspective analysis. This confusion can be avoided by always remembering that *sattva* is part of *prakrti* and cannot provide knowledge without illumination—*citti-sakti*.
27. *Satya*	This *i*s the word used for truth. Literally it means the quality of *sat* or existence. It has two dismensions. In the scale of eternal

	values *purusa* or the supreme God is the only *satya* or real person. Everything else changes or perishes and cannot therefore be real or *satya*. In the phenomenal universe this term is used to mean concord between speech and action i.e., one must speak what he knows (the truth); one must act as one speaks. Such conduct alone can build up an integrated personality. Any variation between speech and action must necessarily make an indent on the integration of personality.
28. *Yoga*	Literally means union, i.e., the merger of the individual soul in the supreme being. This is the objective of the entire process of evolution. But the term *yoga* is used in a narrower sense to refer to certain practices consisting of eight parts (*astanga*) to achieve this objective. Some exercises (called *asanas*), meditation (*dhyana*), and miracles (called *siddhis*) have caught the popular imagination and are referred to as *yoga*. Patanjali is the best exponent of the science of Yoga.

Bibliography

Avalon, Arthur (Sir John Woodroffe), *The Serpent Power*, Ganesh & Co., Madras, India.

Bhagvan Sri Satya Sai Baba, (Discourses), *Satya Sai Speaks*, Vol. III, Sri Satya Sai Trust, Prasantinilayam P.O., Andhra Pradesh, India.

Bhagvan Sri Satya Sai Baba (Discourses), *Satya Sai Speaks*, Vol. VI, Sri Satya Sai Trust, Prasantinilayam P.O., Andhra Pradesh, India.

Bhagvan Sri Satya Sai Baba, *Dhyana Vahini*, Sri Satya Sai Trust, Prasantinilayam P.O., Andhra Pradesh, India.

Bhagvan Sri Satya Sai Baba, *Geeta Vahini*, Sri Satya Sai Trust, Prasantinilayam P.O., Andhra Pradesh, India.

Burrow, Trigant, *The Previous Basis of Human Experience*, Basic Books Incorporated, New York.

Kasturi, K.N., *Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*, Vol. III, Sri Satya Sai Education Foundation, Dharmakshetra, Bombay.

Mitra, Vihari Lal, (trs.), *Yoga Vasishtha Matraramayana*, Bannerjee & Co. Calcutta.

Smythies, J.R., (ed.), *Science and E.S.P.*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Woods, J.H., *The Yoga System of Patanjali*, Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 17.

पुस्तकालय ★ डाक्टर

An Advocate by profession, C Balasingham obtained his B.A. from London University in 1937. He joined the Ceylon Civil Service in 1940 and held various posts during his career, retiring in 1970 as a Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health. He has previously published three books entitled *Agricultural Wages and Earnings of Primary Producers* (1950), *Parliamentary Control of Finance* (1968) and *Bhagavan Sri Satya Sai Baba.*

Jacket Design by Aravind Teki

Towards Divine Living

Compiled by P. K. MADAN

Towards Divine Living is a collection of The Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram's most inspiring sayings and prayers. The Mother met Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry in 1914, and recognised in him a spiritual comrade. She came to live in the Ashram in 1920, and when, in 1926, Sri Aurobindo went into complete seclusion she was appointed its spiritual leader which she continued to be till she 'left her body' on 17 November 1973.

According to The Mother, 'To Lead the Divine Life does not depend on any exterior activity of circumstances; whatever you do from the highest work to the most ordinary, you can lead the Divine Life if you are in the true consciousness and right attitude'. Her main aim was to comprehend all the worlds—from the physical to the spiritual—thereby experiencing the joy of universality.

Crown 8vo ; 89 *pp.* ; *Rs.* 6.50

The Secret of Yoga

GOPI KRISHNA

From the spiritual wisdom of the Vedas and the Upanishads down to the present day, there has persisted a strong current of belief that man can awaken within himself a normally dormant divine energy. The ancient writers ascribed a superhuman status and miraculous powers to those achieving this energy released by means of Yoga or other spiritual disciplines.

The Secret of Yoga is an exploration of the complex terrain of Yoga and its source of energy, *Kundalini*, in the light of modern knowledge. Writing from his own experience and a lifetime of pioneering study, Gopi Krishna surveys the aim of Yoga and how it can be achieved. He describes its disciplines and physiology, outlines the biology of *Kundalini*, and presents it as the key of Cosmic Consciousness.

Demy 8vo ; 207 *pp.* ; *Rs.* 20.00

The Macmillan Company of India Li

DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS